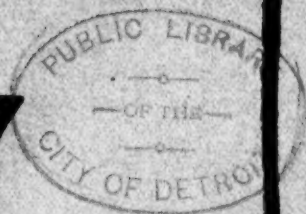


JULY 4, 1903.

The

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SCHOOL COMMISSION.

Berne, 24th June, 1903.

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"LOVE AND THE SOUL HUNTERS"

By JOHN OLIVER HOBBS.

The Spectator says:—There are so many rich people, titled people, fashionable people, among the *dramatis personæ* of Mrs. Craigie's new story that a superficial reader might easily be tempted to class "Love and the Soul Hunters" in the category of the modern novel of "smart" society, against the tyranny of which we have had occasion more than once to protest in the last year. To do so, however, is entirely to misapprehend the significance of the book. For here, at any rate, is no vulgar and obsequious insistence on the luxury of modern life, no auctioneer's chronicle of sumptuous upholstery and expensive viands, no complaisant glorification of the entertainments and amusements of the modern millionaire, no lukewarm reprobation of the laxity of titled wantons. The upholstery and jewels and luxury are there, but they are not wearisomely insisted on; they are treated as accessories inevitable to the *milieu*, but still as accessories. For Mrs. Craigie's aim is to show us her rich and well-born and "smart" people, not merely eating and drinking and gambling, but thinking, planning, scheming, and suffering. She does not blink the materialism of high life and high finance, but she is careful, with a scrupulousness not too common in novelists, to reveal the intellectual, the emotional, the human, side of persons who are professionally not always actuated by disinterested or benevolent motives. Herein we are constantly reminded of Disraeli's novels, where, though the gorgeous upholstery was far more prominent, underneath all their trappings and finery the characters were primarily intelligences, not mere costume-plates. That, then, is the notable and vital difference between Mrs. Craigie and the scribes who worship at the shrine of "smartness." She deals, it is true, mainly, if not entirely, with highly-placed persons, but she is chiefly interested in them in so far as they reveal qualities which cannot be taken for granted, or as in keeping with their antecedents, or with the traditional view of their position,—qualities, furthermore, which are almost invariably higher than might be looked for. Thus the book is full of surprises—and surprise is of the vital essence of recreation—as well as of a sort of fantastic optimism, which is at any rate quite as defensible as the fantastic pessimism of other writers. She shows us a modern Machiavelli utterly subjugated by his infatuation for a girl who is as good as she is beautiful; a Prince steeped in feudal traditions, but capable of being deeply interested in petroleum; an apparent adventuress of dubious parentage and strange associates, still young and bewitching, but with her heart buried in a lunatic asylum with an incurable religious maniac; an amazing American ex-dancer, who after ruthlessly cutting herself

free of all domestic ties, displays a positively chivalrous consideration for her daughter and husband. The characters, like those in Sheridan's plays, are nearly all too clever in speech; even those who are labelled stupid forget themselves at times and develop a gift of expression or an amount of intelligence out of keeping with their antecedents; but much may be forgiven to a writer who combines distinction of style with wit, and Mrs. Craigie possesses both.

On the surface "Love and the Soul Hunters" relates itself to the school of mock-Royal romance, the *beau rôle* being assigned to the son of an ex-King of an imaginary kingdom. But the theme works out on lines which recall neither Daudet's "Rois en Exil" nor Mr. Anthony Hope's excursions into Ruritania. Prince Paul is a *charmeur*, amiable, romantic, accomplished, and susceptible, quite reconciled to his exile so long as he can indulge his artistic tastes and flirt with pretty women. In Clementine Gloucester, the daughter of a well-born but invertebrate English gentleman, he meets for the first time a girl who appeals to his higher nature, and the love interest of the novel resolves itself into one more variation of the theme *μουσικήν ἔρωσ διδάσκει*. Prince Paul is eminently a complex personality. To begin with, he is largely influenced by the feudal traditions which cause him to regard it as a great compliment that he should propose to Clementine a morganatic alliance on the clear understanding that it may, and probably will, be supplemented in his case by an official union. On the other hand, his adaptable and accommodating nature renders him all too ready to come to terms with a ring of cosmopolitan financiers and exploit his expectations at the sacrifice of his patriotism. And the situation is further complicated by the hold which his secretary, Dr. Felshammer, secures on Clementine by rescuing her father from the consequences of his folly. The incidents of the plot give the story the character of a tragi-comedy. It trembles on the verge of farce in the scenes in which Clementine's semi-imbecile father, her mother the ex-dancer (of whose existence she is unaware), and the American millionaire are engaged. It is strenuously romantic in the passages between Clementine and the sinister but infatuated secretary. But although one cannot admit a continuous correspondence with the facts of life—for one thing, Mrs. Craigie carries her disregard for the law of heredity rather too far—the sustained vivacity of the dialogue, the brilliancy of the commentary, and what we have called the fantastic optimism of the moral combine to render the book a most exhilarating entertainment.

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CONTENTS OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY AND AFTER For JULY, 1903.

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THE LITERARY WEEK	3
REVIEWS.	
The Orrery Papers	7
Sir Henry Wentworth Acland, Bart., K.C.B., F.R.S.	8
The Poet's Charter, or the Book of Job	9
Where there is Nothing: being Volume I. of Plays for an Irish Theatre	10
Astronomy for Everybody	10
London Lays—From a London Garden—Through the Ivory Gate—Horn	11
Amoris—A Book of Verses—King and Cardinal. As Crowned Queen	11
Vers l'Amour—Occasional Thoughts	11
SHORT NOTICES:	
The Oldest Code of Laws in the World—World's Children—Literary	12
Landmarks of Oxford—Cricket Across the Seas	12
FICTION:	
Juicy Joe—Arlina Doran—The Undersong	13
Notes on the Week's Novels	14

ARTICLES.	
CHARACTER WRITING	15
Literary Values	16
Paris Letter	17
Impressions—My Landlord	18
DRAMA:	
Laureates at Play. E. K. Chambers	19
ART:	
Soldier, Sailor, and Mezotinter. C. L. H.	20
SCIENCE:	
Circumstantial Evidence. C. W. Saleeby	21
CORRESPONDENCE:	
Dryden's Plays	22
The Alleged Vandalism at Stratford-on-Avon	23
WEEKLY COMPETITION:	
Comment on any article, review or paragraph in last week's ACADEMY	23

The Literary Week.

WE have received since our last issue 26 new works, 14 new editions, and 11 volumes of fiction. Among the publications of the past week we note the following:—

THE FESTIVAL OF SPRING, FROM THE DÍVÁN OF JELÁLEDDÍN.
By William Hastie.

A translation into English gazels after Rückert's versions. Prof. Hastie's admiration for his author is expressed in an interesting introduction. He says: "Jeláleddín is now rising upon our literary horizon in all his native splendour—his name appropriately signifying 'the Splendour of the Faith'—as at once the Dante, the St. Bernard, the Spenser, the Milton, the Angelus Silesius, and the Novalis of the Orient." Prof. Hastie is very angry with Omar Khayyám: he is a cynic, a drunkard, a misanthropist, and a blasphemer. Jeláleddín, on the other hand, "is surely the sweetest, the tenderest, the heavenliest of all the Persian Nightingales, come back to us in our sorest need, and singing to us amid the glory of the Resurrection of Life, in the Festival of another Spring, as he never sang in the English air before."

THE LIFE OF BENVENUTO CELLINI. Two vols. Translated
by Anne MacDonnell.

The first volumes in the "Temple Autobiographies." This new rendering of Cellini's wonderful self-revelation appears to be fresh and virile. The exuberance of Cellini, his insolence, his genius, are forever new. As the translator says, he cries "Go, dissect dead men, and write neat epitaphs upon their tombstones. I am still alive—and incalculable." The volumes are excellently printed and produced, and each has a portrait frontispiece, one of Cellini, the other of François I. At the end of the second volume there are some valuable bibliographical notes.

THE POETICAL WORKS OF JOHN MILTON. Edited by William Aldis Wright.

An excellent edition, with critical notes which run to sixty pages. The poems are arranged, as far as possible, chronologically. Dr. Wright says, after expressing thanks to various people for their assistance: "And while in addition I wish gratefully to acknowledge the large debt I owe to previous editors of Milton, I desire to record my protest against the slipshod habit of some who say, 'Modern editions read,' which has cost me many an hour of unprofitable research."

THE "Mercure de France" takes a lively interest in English letters. It is now running as a serial a translation of Mr. Well's "Love and Mr. Lewisham," and we notice in the current issue reviews of a number of English books by M. Davray, including Mr. Conrad's "Typhoon," Mr. Chesterton's "Browning," Mrs. Humphry Ward's "Lady Rose's Daughter," and Miss Alma Tadema's "Songs of Womanhood." Concerning "Typhoon" we read: "Typhoon est un récit d'une rare grandeur. . . C'est épique. Lisez aussi 'Falk,' 'Amy Foster,' 'To-morrow,' et vous admirerez avec quelle puissance M. Conrad dépeint, évoque ces scènes et leur donne une ampleur qu'aucun drame humain ne peut atteindre. C'est une harmonie de terreur et beauté composée avec des moyens d'une simplicité surprenante par un écrivain absolument exceptionnel." Mr. Chesterton's "Browning" also receives almost unqualified praise: "il est pénétrant, brillant, paradoxal." "Lady Rose's Daughter" does not seem to please the critic of the "Mercure de France." On the other hand Miss Alma Tadema's verse does please M. Davray: "Certains de ces poèmes sont d'une très grande beauté; et tous ont un charme poétique irrésistible. Pensées ou rêveries mélancoliques, émotions délicates ou violentes, douceur et tendresse, amour et haine, aspects de la nature, le poète fut agité chaque fois et vibra jusqu'à la douleur, et ses vers expriment superbement ce qu'il sentit."

We find in this month's "Cornhill" an anonymous article called "Letters to a Young Writer" which is both human and refreshing. The letters quoted were written to the young writer by a novelist who died not long ago, and they are full of kindness and good advice. A simple letter of introduction brought the pair together, and thereafter the novelist took a delighted though critical interest in the youngster's work. Here are a couple of extracts from letters touching on stories which had been submitted for criticism:—

You use the word "aggravation" as though you did not know the meaning of it. You know the meaning of the word as well as any man alive. This is the act of a low profligate.

But how about that ball? There is a long description of a ball, and in the long description there is nothing new except when she asks him to dance with her. But by God you are not justified in describing the band!

Occasionally the novelist wrote for "Cornhill"; one story remained unpublished for a year or two after acceptance, and he wrote to Mr. James Payn suggesting that he should supply the magazine with "a glossary and a list of the words which have become obsolete since the story was written." The story was printed at once. Later, when the young writer had a story taken by "Cornhill," his friend the novelist wrote:—

My dear Youth,—Whenever I hear the name of James Payn spoken in future I shall take off my hat to him.

If ever I hear you utter words not in the highest eulogy of James Payn when you speak his name I shall take off my coat to you.

It is rather surprising to learn that this high-spirited novelist was a confirmed recluse; nothing would tempt him to form new acquaintances or attend social functions. The writer concludes:—

Believe in a man and he is bound to believe a little in himself; but what can be said of the man who believed in one before one was a man oneself, before anybody else dreamt of doing so? Nothing, for he is dead and gone and cannot hear, nor even know. But I like to think of him on those enchanted seas of his, overhauled by an Argosy laden with his own letters, dashed off and forgotten when he was here, for he will be the first to appreciate them spontaneously and impersonally as of old, and I can almost hear him laugh.

We do not propose to discuss further the Froude-Carlyle controversy. It has now reached the stage at which the opposing camps spatter each other with invective, without much true regard to the dead whom they champion. Sir James Crichton-Browne's article in the "Contemporary" leaves things pretty much as they were; he reiterates and reiterates. We quote the following passage because it does present a defensible point of view; the rest of the article is mostly personal and preliminary:—

According to Froude and Mr. McNeill, Carlyle's nobility of nature was conspicuously shown forth in the penitential reparation he resolved to make to his wife's memory. But was this man with his hatred of hypocrisy and fearless sincerity likely to content himself with half an expiation? Was he likely to parade his peccadilloes and hide away his mortal sins? Is it not certain that if he had been guilty of what Mr. McNeill finely calls "brutality" he would have humbled himself in sack-cloth and ashes and confessed his fault? I unhesitatingly affirm that Carlyle never suffered from remorse in Froude's sense of the word, but from poignant grief in which noble natures so often upbraid themselves with imaginary misdeeds and defaults and magnify their foibles into grievous sin. Remorse indeed! as well charge him with pride, over-weening pride, because he fondly exaggerated the virtues and talents of his loved and lost one. There is not to be found in all Carlyle's writings after the death of his wife, when he was probing his heart and memory to their depths, any specific instance of an offence against his wife more serious than his refusal to shake hands with the dressmaker at Madam Elise's, when she desired him to do so; this "cruelty" he afterwards called it.

A CORRESPONDENT of "Notes and Queries" suggests that the baffling words "miching mallico" in the line in "Hamlet," "Marry, this is miching mallico; it means mischief," are a corruption of "Michi Manito," the great spirit of evil in the theology of the North American Indians. What will commentators on the watch have to say to this?

THE other day in the "Morning Post" Mr. Andrew Lang said some true things about the poetry-reading public. Some of us have supposed that our young enthusiasm for verse has descended to our children or our friends' children, but the facts are rather against that optimistic belief. Even the older poets, Mr. Lang surmises—Shakespeare, Spenser, Pope, Scott—are largely bought as birthday presents and school prizes. Says Mr. Lang:—

Children used to like poetry long ago, not only Aytoun, and ballads, and Macaulay, but Shakespeare. Now they shy away from a gift of a poetry book, and think (if they do not say, like an outspoken boy of my acquaintance) "I suppose somebody will give me a Prayer Book next." I attribute this unnatural behaviour to education. The modern child lives in constant fear of being pounced on and asked questions, and made to get poetry off by heart, which children used to do for their own delight. Perhaps they were always the exceptions; we do not hear that Scott's many brothers and sisters went about shouting "Hardyknute."

Another reason is that people read poetry for its moral purpose, and form themselves into societies for discovering the undiscoverable. Poetry has not necessarily anything whatever to do with moral purpose. Mr. Lang concludes:—

Then we have all the lectures and books on the sources of poets, and what they cribbed from each other, and about foreign influences, and philology, and whatever else delights the soul of Professor Skeat and other professors. So poetry becomes a branch of science and contributes to the vast dreariness of ineffectual things.

We shall have to get back to simplicity and the fairies somehow.

IN the current "Harper's Magazine," Mr. Arthur Symonds has an article on "Romeo and Juliet." The writer says:—

The play of "Romeo and Juliet" is like a piece of music, and it is the music which all true lovers have heard in the air since they began listening to one another's voice. Here, for once, youth becomes conscious of itself, and of the charm which is passing out of the world with its passing. A young man wrote this wise and passionate eulogy of youth; and it is that contemporaneous heat of blood in it which has kept the names of these two young lovers alive in men's minds as the perfect exemplars of unspoiled love.

IN this play and in "Antony and Cleopatra," says Mr. Symonds, Shakespeare "expounds the whole art of love":—

The passion of Romeo for Juliet and of Juliet for Romeo is a part of nature; not a whim, not a dream, not a sick fancy bred in the brain, but nature itself. It is sex, although the idea of sex is overflowed by a divine oblivion; Romeo sighs after "the white wonder of dear Juliet's hand," and Juliet's is the most honest, the most daylight passion that has ever been spoken in words; it speaks as straight, feels as deeply, and adds as much courtesy to passion as the heroic love which takes on chivalry without quitting nature in Gottfried of Strasburg's "Tristan und Isolde."

Mr. Abbey's illustrations to the play are such as only Mr. Abbey could produce. That illustrating the words "O happy dagger! This is thy sheath . . ." is full of beauty and passion and romance.

Not long ago, in reviewing the narrative of the Duke of the Abruzzi's cruise towards the Arctic Circle, we ventured the prediction that, if the North Pole was ever reached, the triumph would probably be achieved by means of a motor car. Our reasoning was that, as the gases needful to the floating of a balloon cannot stand the extremely low temperature, and even sledge dogs die or have to be killed for the food of others, the motor car was the only conceivable instrument of transport left untried. Well, it is now announced that Mr. Charles J. Glidden, of Massachusetts, is to make the experiment we foreshadowed. He is in England, preparing. On arriving at Liverpool, he disclosed his project to the representative of the "Daily Mail":—

"The roads of Norway," said Mr. Glidden, "will permit of the motor-car being driven six hundred miles north of Christiania. But beyond Christiania gasoline cannot be bought, and it has been necessary to send peasant agents ahead to distribute enough of the liquid to cover a total drive of 1,200 miles. I expect difficulties and delays, but have secured the necessary Government permits."

It is added that Mr. Glidden hopes to reach Namsos, 8½ deg. outside the Arctic Circle, or even beyond; and that when a return is made a flag will be deposited locally as a challenge to any member of the Massachusetts Automobile Club to carry it farther.

The new play by Mr. Bernard Shaw, "Man and Superman," which was recently "read" for copyright purposes, seems to promise rather well. It covers a number of themes—Mr. Shaw could never be content with one—including the repugnance which springs from blood relationship and the silliness of romance. The hero makes up his mind never to allow the heroine to marry him, but of course his resolution breaks down. Incidentally we have a dream interlude in which the devil, Don Juan and others discuss love and various vital matters to musical phrases from Mozart.

SOME interesting particulars concerning the "London Gazette" are given in the July "Strand Magazine." The "London Gazette" is now part of the Constitution, and is the oldest and least read of all newspapers; yet it yields an annual profit of £20,000. In size it may vary from one page to a hundred; it is the only paper whose word is law, and its authority is accepted in the witness box. At one time the "Gazette" was published directly by Government; now it is in the hands of Messrs. Harrison, of St. Martin's Lane, who are responsible for it. A good story is told about the "Gazette" and the battle of Alma. The news reached England on September 30, 1854. Mr. Harrison was sitting in his office when a messenger arrived from the Duke of Newcastle, the First Secretary of State for War, asking him to hasten to Downing Street:—

Hurrying back with the messenger, Mr. Harrison found the Duke in a state of great excitement. "We have such glorious news," said the Duke, explaining the nature of it. But the puzzle was how to make it known. Of course it would be printed in the "Gazette"; but it was Saturday evening, and there were no papers until Sunday, and it was important that the public anxiety should be allayed by the widest possible circulation of such a piece of news. "Nobody knows it, and I don't know how to communicate it," the Duke went on.

Mr. Harrison's imagination jumped at the theatre. He went back to the offices, set up the news himself, and sent men round to the theatres with early copies of the "Gazette." The result was finely dramatic.

THE question of the genuineness of "The Journal of Arthur Stirling," which we reviewed recently, would now appear to be settled. The matter was discussed in America

with more interest probably than in England. About a month ago there was published in the New York "Evening Post" a long letter from the author in which he confessed that the work was entirely imaginary. There has been so much deliberate mystification about the whole business, however, that we should not be surprised to hear that this letter was a veiled advertisement.

THE "Monthly Review" prints a poem in hexameters by Mr. Robert Bridges, called "Epistle to a Socialist in London," which runs to fifteen pages. The opening sentence contains sixteen lines. As we said the other day, there is no reason why Mr. Bridges should not experiment in Stone's prosody or any other prosody, so long as the result be good poetry. There is some poetry in this "Epistle," though it takes an unconscionable deal of digging out. Here is a passage:—

What madness works to delude you,
Being a man, that you see not mankind's predilection
Is for Magnificence, Force, Freedom, Bounty; his inborn
Love for Beauty, his aim to possess, his pride to devise it:
And from everlasting his heart is fixt with affections
Præengag'd to a few sovranly determinat' objects,
Toys of an eternal distraction. Beautiful is Gold,
Clear as a trumpet-call, stirring where'er it appeareth
All high pow'rs to battle; with magisterial ardour
Glowing among the metals, elemental drops of a fire-god's
Life-blood of old out-pour'd in Chaos: Magical also
Ev'ry recondite jewel of Earth, with their seraphim-names,
Ruby, Jacynth, Emerald, Amethyst, Sapphire; amaranthine
Starry essences, elect emblems of purity, heirlooms
Of deathless glories, most like to divine imanences.

A NOTE in "Art," one of the many new periodicals which have recently appeared, is curiously belated. "In the Royal Academy, London," we read, "an exhibition has been held of some pictures by Alb. Cuyp and other works by English Masters: Turner, Gainsborough, Constable, &c." This, of course, refers to the winter Old Masters Exhibition.

THE July number of the "Revue de Paris" contains an article by M. Joseph Aynard, on the novels of Mr. Thomas Hardy and the tendency of his work. M. Aynard says that the Wessex tales combine the romance of Balzac with the descriptive force of Zola. We do not think the comparison particularly happy; we can see little affinity, at any rate, between Balzac and Mr. Hardy. Nor can we agree with M. Aynard's further assertion, that Maupassant's manner approaches Mr. Hardy's. We do, however, agree with the writer that Mr. Hardy's want of conventionality is neither immoral nor revolutionary. He represents, as the writer says, contemporary pessimism in a country where optimism is a sort of official creed. As a creed, official or otherwise, optimism has chosen the better part. But the matter is hardly one for discussion in connection with the work of a novelist so essentially temperamental as Mr. Hardy.

THE first number of the "Avon Booklet," which is to consist of a series of monthly reprints of rare or obsolete literature, consists of Browning's essay on Shelley. The circumstances in which the essay was written are curious. Fifty years ago Edward Moxon, the publisher, was hoaxed into purchasing a collection of twenty-five supposed letters of Shelley. To these Browning was invited to contribute an introduction, and he took the opportunity to acknowledge the debt of gratitude he owed to Shelley as his first and chiefest master in poetry. Before the volume got into circulation the letters were found to be forgeries. The book was immediately suppressed, and only a very few copies are now in existence. But the value of the essay remains, and we are glad to have it in this pleasant and handy form.

THE report of Mr. George Meredith's illness which was abroad on Wednesday was, fortunately, exaggerated. An enterprising reporter seems to have been responsible for the statement that Mr. Meredith had "periods of partial consciousness." In a telegram to the "Westminster Gazette" Mr. Meredith said "the difficulty with me is to obtain unconsciousness." As a matter of fact Mr. Meredith's illness has not been dangerous, though there was a temporary relapse which caused some uneasiness.

THE romance of the picture sale-room is by no means dead yet. The portrait of a young lady by Gainsborough which was sold not long ago for nine thousand guineas had been in obscurity for years. The picture was the property of a lady who had inherited it; she had no idea of the value of the portrait, nor had she any knowledge of either artist or sitter. The canvas was dirty, daubed with brown varnish, and had a hole in it. The "Burlington Gazette," while acknowledging that it is a thing of rare beauty, adds: "one can only stare in open-mouthed wonder at the enormity of the sum given for it by its present possessor, whilst congratulating its late owner on having, to borrow a phrase from the financial world, sold out at the top of the market."

MR. PASSMORE EDWARDS has for the second time declined a knighthood. In a letter addressed to Mr. Balfour Mr. Edwards said: "Possibly His Majesty may not be aware that the Queen, his mother, graciously offered me a similar distinction many years since. . . . Mr. Edwards may be sure that offers of that kind are not forgotten. It is not the first time in history that a knighthood has been offered twice and been twice refused."

It is always interesting to see what literary people give to literary people in the way of wedding presents. Amongst the gifts showered on Mr. Anthony Hope the other day we notice the following: Mr. Edmund Gosse, liqueur set; Mrs. Humphry Ward, set of Matthew Arnold's poems; Mr. and Mrs. J. M. Barrie, antique cabinet; Mrs. W. K. Clifford, old Dutch milking pail; Mr. and Mrs. W. L. Courtney, coal box; Authors' Society, silver punch bowl.

Bibliographical.

I SEE that the publisher of "The Avon Booklet," the first number of which is now in circulation, promises that "in an early issue will be given the complete series of Tennyson's suppressed poems, now for the first time collected." No doubt such a publication would have interest, bibliographical and otherwise; but is it feasible? The "suppressed poems" can, of course, be printed up to a certain point, but no further, unless with the approval of the holders of copyright. What Tennyson published after 1860 is not yet common property; and some of it does not figure in the finally-collected Works. Only up to 1860 can the publisher of "The Avon Booklet" work his will. The feeling with which his enterprise will be regarded will probably be mixed. Personally I have always regretted that the poet when reprinting the first verse of "Hands All Round" (1859) did not also reprint the two stirring stanzas addressed to America. These, I think, ought to be kept on record. I should also like to see permanence given to some of the stanzas in "Britons, Guard Your Own" (1852). Fifty years ago Tennyson was giving to his

countrymen advice which, if taken and remembered, might have helped to shorten the Boer war:—

We were the best of marksmen long ago,
We won old battles with our strength, the bow.
Now practice, yeomen,
Like those bowmen,
Till your balls fly as their shafts have flown.
Yeomen, guard your own.

"The New Timon and the Poets" is also a composition which, though it perpetuates an old dead feud, deserves to live in literature. The sonnets—"Me my own fate to lasting sorrow doometh" and "Check every outflash, every ruder sally" (1833)—are also, I think, for various reasons, worth preserving. For the rest, Mr. Churton Collins, in the appendix to his "Early Poems of Lord Tennyson," has already reprinted those pieces in the 1830 and 1832 volumes which the poet definitely discarded.

It is to be assumed that Mr. John Hollingshead has now said all that he has got to say about the London Gaiety Theatre. He told the story of that playhouse, to begin with, in 1895, when he published a two-volume autobiography called "My Lifetime." Then came the volume entitled "Gaiety Chronicles" (1898), in which he retold the story in greater detail, with many pictorial illustrations, and with a complete chronological list of the pieces produced at the Gaiety under his management, which began in 1868 and ended in 1886. In the book called "Good Old Gaiety," which has been issued by the Gaiety Theatre Company, Limited, and a copy of which is to be presented to every member of the audience on the closing night of the theatre (to-morrow, Saturday), Mr. Hollingshead adopts a sketchy method of treatment, and at the same time brings the story of the playhouse down to date. Of his 76 pages he gives the last 29 to the Gaiety as conducted by its present manager, covering the ground between 1886 and 1903.

The Cambridge University Press will start its new series of English classics in unimpeachable fashion. We shall all of us be glad to commend scholarly editions of the "Leviathan" and of Crashaw. The latter, presumably, will be absolutely complete. Of the English verses we had reprints in 1900 and 1901, the former under the auspices of an enthusiast, Mr. J. R. Tutin; the latter under the editorship of Mr. Edward Hutton. That side of Crashaw, therefore, is fairly well-known. The "Leviathan," also, has not been neglected of late years. Rather expensive editions of it came out in 1881; then there was a less expensive one—its origin, I think, Oxford—in 1882. In 1885 Routledges issued it at a shilling. We had the "Behemoth" in 1889 and 1894, and it is notable that Croom Robertson's monograph on Hobbes ("Philosophical Classics") was reprinted in 1901.

Messrs. Methuen's forthcoming edition of Dumas père's romances should appeal successfully to more than one class. Of course Messrs. Dent's edition of 1894-97 must have satisfied the wants of many, but Messrs. Methuen's should have even a wider public, looking at the prices to be charged. That there is a persistent demand for Dumas in English is certain. Last year, I think, we had nothing but a single version of "The Black Tulip"; on the other hand, there were, in 1901, reprints in English of half-a-dozen of the tales. In 1900 only two Dumas stories were reproduced, but in 1899 there were no fewer than four reprints of "Twenty Years' After," two of "The Black Tulip," and one each of eight other stories. As many as six reprints of "The Three Musketeers" appeared in 1898, together with one each of five other romances. The "Musketeer" trilogy and "Monte Cristo" seem to be always wanted; it would be interesting to know the exact degree of popularity enjoyed by all the tales.

THE BOOKWORM.

Reviews.

An Elegant Earl.

THE ORRERY PAPERS. Edited by the Countess of Cork and Orrery. 2 vols. (Duckworth. 42s. net.)

A cool garden corner, a dazzling sky, and roses under it: these and the letters of an elegant eighteenth-century earl will make you a world of unfurried enjoyment. Let John Boyle, fifth Earl of Orrery, be that elegant earl. There exists a portrait of Lord Chesterfield, with a book in his hand lettered "Orrery's Pliny." You see the Earl well through such a medium. He was a litterateur, but he did not so much patronise small writers as envy great ones. He seems to have paid real homage to Pope. Swift also was his friend, and the aged and merry Tom Southerne, to whom he always wrote with peculiar affection and with the modern address "My dear Old Man." But the Earl knew life as well as literature. He was a keen watcher of the political skies; he had the cares of estates both in England and Ireland; he lived in both countries; and he was twice married, each time with more than ordinary happiness. Lastly, he did nothing really important which you are under compulsion to understand. Thus the blue sky and the roses are blandly present to your mind, enveloping you in the gentlest melancholy as the pages recel those eighteenth-century summers whose freshness we rarely feel in the formal literature of the period, but which breathes here in the letters of husband and wife, of friend and friend. All literary barriers are broken down when we read the Earl's description of his life at Caledon, his seat in Tyrone:—

I am charmed with Caledon, and when I should be writing to my Friends, I am moving an old Gate or cutting down an antient Apple Tree for a Prospect: in short, I am lost amidst the various Pleasures of inglorious Ease. The morning dawns, and my little Pad ambles with Me through all my various Groves and verdant Fields. At Noon, I lean upon my Pitchfork and eat my oaten Cake. The afternoon is pass'd at the Pick-Ax and the Spade, at Night Lady Orrery's Voice and Harpsichord in sweet Delights transport my Soul to Rest. My Days are innocent, my Nights are happy. Cheerfulness sits smiling round Me, and Plenty keeps close to my Side. My Gate stands open to the Widow and the Stranger.

But the Earl has no idea of sinking into bucolic commonplace. An author, and the friend of authors, he is never long happy without his pen, and from Caledon, in 1739, he announces to Dr. King, of St. Mary Hall, his Pliny, which is to be "a great Work, such a Work as will require all my own Attention and all the Assistance of my learned Friends." It seems as if we shall move mountains of Pliny; but instead we have this little interior: "My greatest disadvantage is, that if I err or mistake his [Pliny's] meaning I have no Body to set me right. I have no Assistance but my own Brains and Lady Orrery's Ears, to whom I read each Epistle (like Molière to his old Woman in the Chimney Corner), and from her Criticisms form my Sentences at least more tuneable, if not more exact." In short, Pliny slips easily into the Earl's life, into days which he confesses "slide away in uxurious happiness and rustic Joys." Presently he is filling a long letter, not with Pliny, but with the tuft-hunting proclivities of one of his visitors, "the most impertinent, the most inquisitive, the most disagreeable, the most dismal, and the most sycophantic Lord-following Fool that Earth ever produc'd." This person plagued him in his cherished seclusion with questions and, when he stopped these, with forebodings. "He was perpetually regretting that my sons had not had the small-Pox. He observed that my Daughter look'd pale and consumptive, but hop'd, with a sigh, that she might rub thro' it, tho' Master Peachick look'd just so before he died." One of

the recipes for eighteenth century humour peeps out here. You are not surprised to find that the Earl contributed an essay or two to the "Connoisseur," but he wrote nothing so unconstrained and delightful as his letters. What could transcend the following in pleasantness of association and humour:—

I am jogging on in Mottos. The Statue of Diana stands at the entrance of a wood, which by the turn of the river is formed into a Peninsula. Fields again on every side, the motto is:

En lucus et ara Dianæ
Et properantis aquae per amēnos ambitus agros.

But to tell the truth, my tenants have a notion that I am atheistically inclined, by putting up heathen statues and writing upon them certain words in an unknown language. By accident, an attorney, who guides most of them in their family disputes, had enough left of school learning to declare that my mottos were all latin, which proved still more dangerous, not only to my character but to my life. They immediately suspected me for a papist, and my statues had been demolished, my woods burnt, and my throat cut had not I suddenly placed a seat under an holly bush with this plain inscription, *SIT DOWN AND WELCOME*. I have assured them that all the Latin mottos are to this purpose, and that in places where they cannot sit down, I have desired them in the old Norman dialect to go to the lodge and drink Whisky.

Again, is not this dry-point of a Bath bookseller worth having?

This Leake is a most extraordinary Person. . . . He looks upon every Man distinguished by any Title, not only as his Friend, but his companion, and he treats him accordingly: but he disposes of his Favours and Regards as methodically as Nash takes out the Ladies to dance, and therefore speaks not to a Marquiss whilst a Duke is in the Room. As yet he is ignorant that my Earldom lies in Ireland, and to keep him so I have borrowed the only Book of Heraldry He had in his Shop: by this method I shall be served many degrees above my Place, and may have a Squeeze of his Hand in presence of an Earl of Great Britain.

His Shop is a spacious Room, filled from the Cornice to the Skirting. But I could not help observing to him that, "The Binding of his Books did not make so glittering a Figure as might be expected from the Library of a Person so illustrious as himself." He owned the observation was right, and added that "Some Fellows, whose Ancestors, he believed, were Snails, had been daily expected from London, to illuminate and glorify his Musaeum." I rejoiced at the good News, and told him, "I doubted not but he would show the Elasticity of his Genius and the Nicknackatory of his Understanding by binding Lord Bacon in Hog's Skin, Bishop Sprat in Fish Skin, and Cardinal du Bois in Wood." He seemed highly delighted with my Proposal, and was going to enter it in his Pocket Book when the Dutches of Norfolk, snatching him from my Arms, allowed me an opportunity to assure You that I am, &c.

The Earl's contacts with the literary men of his time are not very numerous, but they are always elegant and interesting. One honours him for writing to his wife that he is going out of Town with Mr. Pope and Lord Chesterfield, which he says he esteems higher than an attendance on his Sacred Majesty, King G. He was Swift's friend, and he laboriously edited the Dean's works, taking much counsel of his second wife, who writes to him, from Caledon, pages of minute and sympathetic criticism of his commentary. Once, at least, she drops a sentence or two that one is likely to remember for something more than its crazy spelling. After reading her husband's "second Volum":—

The great regularity of his [Swift's] Life, constantly measured by his Watch, plainly shewed his mind to be uneasy, and I doubt he said with the Israelites, "in the evening would God it were morning, and in the morning would God it were Evening," for certainly those that are at ease will sometimes say "what have we to do with Hours?" and tho' there is a great fault in forgetting time and regularity too much, and in hurrying life away, yet an agreeable forgetfulness sometimes can be no fault, and I believe no happy person is ever without this unbending of the Soul.

Richardson and Fielding are at the height of their fame in the period covered by these Letters, and the Earl is kept constantly informed of their doings by his bookish friends, and by none more assiduously than the Rev. Thomas Birch, in whose letters we see the most familiar literature of the period in its swaddling clothes. Does the Earl remember a very clever satire called "London," in the manner of Juvenal, published about nine years ago? Well, the author, Mr. Sam Johnson, has undertaken a work long wished for, nothing else than an English Dictionary, and he has printed a plan of it in a letter to Lord Chesterfield of 34 pages in 4to., a "very ingenious piece." A year later it is epistolary news for the Earl that Mr. Garrick is going to entertain the town with a tragedy entitled "Irene" by Mr. Johnson, whose dictionary, though in great forwardness, must not be looked for these two or three years. Meanwhile Mr. Richardson's "Clarissa" is in the press, and Mr. Fielding's novel "The Foundling" will be published about the same time. Mr. Warburton is editing Mr. Pope's works. The King of Prussia has lately resumed authorship, and "it will be well for Europe if he will no otherwise employ himself for the rest of his life."

All this illuminating prattle by and to the Earl—and his wife's headache got through sitting up half the night to read "Amelia" in her Tyrone boudoir—goes vastly well with your garden ease and the scent of increasing roses. It is with a wise and comfortable smile that you read his lordship's one gloomy summary of his age. Though he had much to make him think comfortably of life, his opinion of his countrymen, when he wrote almost exactly 150 years ago, was becoming less and less favourable. For, "to say truth, we are a declining People; destined, I fear, to absolute destruction. We have had our Day. It ended with Queen Ann."

The Earl believed he had seen England at her best. Perhaps all Earls and carls have thought so. After all, it is the summer and the roses that matter; and a woman's voice in the air. Whatever ended with Queen Ann, or Queen Cleopatra, these remain, and the eternal entertainment of books. What is this? "Sir Josslebury Pitcher had the honour to be choked yesterday by a fish-bone . . ." Admirable Earl, with your gossip, and your taste, and your two adoring wives, you would be much envied if you were not dead! As for your letters, we who still imagine greatness for England borrow Lady Margaret's word and pronounce them "excalant."

Oxford and Medicine.

SIR HENRY WENTWORTH ACLAND, BART., K.C.B., F.R.S. By J. B. Atlay. (Smith, Elder. 14s. net.)

THE influence of Henry Acland upon medical and scientific study at Oxford was so wide and important that its value can hardly be overrated. He evolved order out of chaos, and brought light to a particularly impenetrable form of darkness. But beyond his work for the University was his work for his profession; his large humanity and tenderness made him an ideal physician; indeed it was largely to such men as Acland that the finest profession in the world owed its social emancipation. The country doctor of the early and mid-nineteenth century was a person of small account; he was useful in illness, no doubt, but socially he was nowhere. He still laboured under the shadow of the word apothecary, and was hardly altogether free from the barber-surgeon suggestion. Acland was never a great London doctor—the great London doctors, of course, always had social standing—he was a provincial doctor, and that in a city of marked conservatism. Yet he won, and that by no means on the strength of his name.

There was something in the name, however. The name of Acland is written broad over the West of England; a

local saying has it that the world thereabouts is made up of "men, women, and Aclands." Sir Thomas Acland, the father of the subject of this memoir, was something of a feudal lord; he ruled both his family and estate firmly but kindly. The method which he adopted for the bringing up of his children strikes us, nowadays, as narrow and not altogether wise; but it succeeded, and the generations which came after loved him. There seems to be no doubt that he was portentous. A letter quoted by Mr. Atlay, written by Sir Thomas to the boy Henry, after the youngster had nearly blown himself to pieces with gunpowder, is a fine example of how not to admonish youth on such occasions. Yet there is plenty of evidence, too, of the man's brightness and manliness and many-sidedness, though when he put pen to paper he became didactic and diffuse. All the Aclands, indeed, when it came to writing, appear to have been overlavish of words.

Henry Acland's youth was not quite happy. He went to Harrow in the days when the school was under something of a cloud; at that time our public schools at the best were difficult developing grounds for sensitive lads. And Acland was ultra-sensitive and never over robust in health. Writing later to his father of his school-time he said: "The early part of my life was wasted in frivolous indolence; my conscience was dimmed, the perception of the beauty of holiness and the simple love of what is excellent after its kind was, I trust, though dormant not extinguished." We rather gather that he was a somewhat morbid lad, too introspective for a boy's happiness. The Oxford life was hardly more to his taste; his desire for actuality and his passion for making the dry bones live continually clashed with cast-iron institutions and a dogged objection to innovation. He never became "an out-and-out All Souls man."

Acland's decision to study medicine was not made without much questioning and uneasiness, and when he settled in London to attend St. George's we find him still not without serious misgivings. This part of his life is perhaps of most interest to those who search for the formative influences on character. Within a few days of entering his name he wrote to his constant friend Charles Courtenay:—

I have been talking . . . about the hospital. I declare in some things my heart wellnigh fails. I have an instinctive horror of death; all of it that I have seen has been of drowned and drowning men, save only some awful accidents; no calm, peaceful departure, has been my impression hitherto.

He shrank from the degradations of mortality, and hardly less from the indifference of the ordinary student. He strove to support himself through the ordeal by the use of a prayer which he repeated daily on reaching the hospital, a prayer commencing with these words: "Almighty and Everlasting God, who makest me to do those things that be good and acceptable to Thy Divine Majesty, let Thy Fatherly hand, I beseech Thee, be over me in these my fearful studies." Here was a man, clearly, who, if he came through the ordeal at all, would come through it to good purpose. To what good purpose Acland came through it these pages testify.

From London Acland went to Edinburgh, where he finally settled down happily in the house of Dr. Alison. But soon that quiet life was broken; he was offered the Lee's Readership in Anatomy. To accept this meant that his hopes of a London practice would be at an end. On the other hand Sir Benjamin Brodie had said: "If you settle in London you will not live to be forty." He decided on Oxford. Almost at the same moment Dr. Wootton, one of the most popular physicians in Oxford, was in failing health, and his practice was open to transference. There were certain difficulties in the way of the combination of the Readership in Anatomy with a private practice, but these were overcome, and Acland turned physician in earnest.

For some years his life became one of almost unexampled hard work; as a doctor he never spared himself, and his university appointment gave him the opportunity to push his own practical ideas. Science and medical teaching in Oxford was a farce. Her attitude towards Natural Science was summarised by Acland in these words:—

The Science Studies of the University were from various causes almost extinct, notwithstanding the efforts of Buckland, Kidd, and Daubeny. . . . The intellect of the University was wholly given to ecclesiastical and theological questions. All physical science was discountenanced.

Acland's fight for efficiency was a great fight, and he won it, but his difficulties, humorous enough to read about now, were enormous. Dr. Kidd, who occasionally turned up at his lectures, "after examining some delicate morphological preparation, while his young colleague explained the meaning, made answer, first, that he did not believe in it, and secondly, that if it were true, he did not think God meant us to know it." But Acland, in time, gathered strong supporters about him, so that at last out of his efforts sprang the Oxford Museum and all that that implied. The story of the Museum has been so often told that we need not dwell upon it here; it was condemned by a certain theological element both inside and outside the University; one foolish divine always referred to it as "the cockatrice's den," and there were others who held that the dissolvent effect of science would make hash of the literal interpretation of the Books of Moses. Acland and his supporters had to contend, also, against different and absolutely unjust attacks; but in the end they won and Oxford got her Museum.

Acland held the Regius Professorship for thirty-six years, and during that time he altered the whole tone of Oxford towards the science and profession which he loved. But in thinking of the man perhaps one thinks of him first as the kindly physician, the constant friend, the indefatigable lover of his kind. He fought the cholera in Oxford as he fought for his ideals in the University, and his house in Broad Street was always open to all sorts and conditions of men, from Wardens to chimney-sweeps. He was beloved of Ruskin, and Gladstone, and Jowett, and probably died without an enemy.

Mr. Atlay has done his work well. His narrative is sympathetic, and he has condensed a great deal of matter into a very readable form. Above all, he has not packed his pages with unnecessary correspondence.

A Poetical Confession of Faith.

THE POET'S CHARTER, OR THE BOOK OF JOB. By F. B. Money-Coutts. (Lane. 3s. 6d. net.)

MR. MONEY-COUTTS, who has hitherto been known as a poet, here puts forward in prose what may be considered his poetical confession of faith. In a general way, it may be taken as one of the books, like Mr. Le Gallienne's "Religion of a Literary Man," brought forth by Coventry Patmore's "Religio Poetæ," even as that traced ancestry to Sir Thomas Browne's "Religio Medici." But it is none the less individual enough, and written in good literary prose. It starts with the idea that the primary motive of religion is to seek God. The received theological explanation of the origin of evil, the fall of the revolting angels and so forth, the author sets aside. There is in Christianity no final revelation, he declares; it is a religion of evolution, a religion of research.

He appeals to the Book of Job as his charter. There, in opposition to his friends, who are assured that their knowledge of God and God's ways is final, who would have Job renounce his quest of God and accept their ready-made theology—"renounce God and die"—Job maintains the unfinality of human knowledge in regard to God, and his right to seek him. That is the right

of all men, it constitutes religion and justifies heresy, without which religious progress is impossible. Its true hierophant and prophet is not the priest, but the poet.

On the rightness of this conception it is not our function here to pronounce. We merely interpret it. But we may say, incidentally, that the author does not seem to us to have any deep insight into the various myths and symbols, heathen or Judaic, which he cites in the course of his contention. "The religions of all nations are derived from each nation's different reception of the Poetic Genius, which is everywhere called the spirit of prophecy," he quotes from his favourite Blake. And his book is a plea for the divine mission of the poet as prophet and teacher of the nations. It has many passages of eloquence and insight; nowhere more than in the final section, where he deals with the decline of poetry, as regards its higher functions, in our own day. The first cause he advances is the commercial spirit, or the preoccupation with external things. He quotes Newman:—

To consider the world in its various length and breadth; . . . the impotent conclusions of long-standing facts, the tokens so faint and broken of a superintending design, the blind evolution of what turns out to be great powers or truths, the progress of things, as if from unreasoning elements, not towards final causes . . . that condition of the whole race, so fearfully yet exactly described in the Apostle's words, *Having no hope and without God in the world*—all this is a vision to dizzy and appal; and inflicts upon the mind the sense of a profound mystery, which is absolutely beyond human solution. . . . I can only answer, that either there is no Creator, or this living society of men is in a true sense discarded from his presence.

The prevalent absorption of men in externals is truly a kind of Satanic possession, says Mr. Money-Coutts: "their souls are dissipated into their senses, with the result that their emotions demand eternal excitement; yet, do what they will, they remain discontented, peevish, neurotic." To such, poetry, if not despised, can only be of value as a casual luxury, the amusement of an idle hour. Trade "has become a Religion, inimical to all Reason and Imagination that do not minister . . . to its interests; and the wars and rumours of wars with which the earth is filled, are due to Trade having become the father of war, and no longer content merely to follow the flag." Which is true, nor does Mr. Money-Coutts seem hopeful that poetry singly can convert the nations from their materiality.

Another cause of poetic decline he attributes to false ideas of genius, as something incalculable which produces great work without care or labour. Carlyle's dictum has been misunderstood, as though he asserted the capacity for taking trouble to be genius itself. But it is an essential attribute of genius. Such a poem as "Christabel," the author truly says, is no refutation. Most great poetry, in especial lyric poetry, is swiftly done. "Is not such poetry as yours very difficult to write, M. Hugo?" someone asked. "No," was the answer; "it is either very easy or impossible." Just so; but that ease is the result of long previous labour and meditation. Coleridge, as Mr. Money-Coutts says, despite his opium, was a prodigious worker. Poetry cannot be written by anyone with a gift and an impulse, as people think. Popular speech is useless for it. "Everything that Poetry requires is lacking in common conversation, and everything is present in common conversation that Poetry must reject. . . . It has a very small vocabulary, and makes up for the want of the right word by using some other in a false sense." These concluding chapters, in fine, are full of pregnant sense and sound insight. They would alone differentiate this book from the multitude of books without thought, substance, or individual perception which are poured out every day from the press.

A Drama of Revolt.

WHERE THERE IS NOTHING: BEING VOLUME I. OF PLAYS FOR AN IRISH THEATRE. By W. B. Yeats. (A. H. Bullen, 3s. 6d. net.)

IN this play Mr. Yeats has forsaken—not poetry, but the poetic method, and adopted the realistic method, the greater part of the dialogue being in the language of the Irish people; while the overwhelming mass of the characters are either tinkers, or Irish friars recruited from the people, and retaining peasant simplicity of speech and nature. For the exposition of his own ideas, however, he has been enforced to make his hero a gentleman, with democratic enthusiasms. In a preface Mr. Yeats explains that his own poetic impulse was derived from popular Irish legends and stories, gathered among the people, and that he had insensibly lost the vitality of this impulse during his London strife for livelihood. He was getting too literary and cosmopolitan. A "wise woman" in trance told him his inspiration was from the moon, and he should always live close to water, for he was getting too full of those "little jewelled thoughts that come from the sun, and have no nation." He understood this symbolically; the common people being under the moon, while he did not need Porphyry "to remember the image-making power of the waters." Mr. Yeats might also have recollected, what he does not observe, that the waters themselves signify the people; one remembers the Apocalyptic Woman sitting on many waters—"Now the waters are peoples, and nations, and tongues." He concluded that he must return to the peasantry, who had been the well-spring of his virgin inspiration. And this play is one of the results.

Now with the principle we agree; by no means with the application of it. When Mr. Yeats was transmuting into exquisite preternatural poetry the legends which lingered among the Irish peasantry; or rather, and more essentially, the effect of those legends upon himself, he was most himself. We regretted a growing and alien complexity in part of the "Wind Among the Reeds," a symbolic pedantry. But from that to realism is more than a return; it is a new departure. To abandon the lovely filmy poetry which expresses his own temper (the temper of a cultivated babe, if we may use that expression, drawing from the peasant breast the "milk of Paradise") and assimilate with the milk of the peasant foster-mother her tongue and even her personality—or rather painfully imitate than assimilate them—this is a reversal of all he has previously done, and we think a mistake.

The aim and substance, of course, are ideal—for Mr. Yeats under any garb must be Mr. Yeats; but the method, the presentment, are zealously realistic—the poet gratulates himself on having caught the peasant speech better than ever before. And not only so, but the atmosphere of the play is realistic. In "The Land of Heart's Delight," peasant characters were made subservient to a wholly ideal method. Not so here; and frankly, we grudge Mr. Yeats to realism. Men of less rare gift can handle the method as well, and better. But Mr. Yeats's way was the secret of Mr. Yeats. The realism, we imagine, is largely successful, yet does not quite persuade our acceptance. Are these indeed Irish tinkers? Very surely they are not English tinkers. With all the poet's emphasis, in detail, of their materiality, they are not material, not gross enough, for one's experience of lawless, uneducated humanity. The monastery is unthinkable to anyone with a knowledge of monasteries. But were the realism above question, we should still mourn. For the poet's poetry is gone. It appears in a saying here and there; in a few passages where Mr. Yeats lets himself go, and speaks through the hero's mouth; but even there it is rather poetic eloquence than poetry. The whole thing resembles a sometimes eloquent prose pamphlet, for the dissemination of Mr. Yeats's views; a pamphlet cast in dramatic form,

but with its pamphlet purpose writ large on it. The hero, designed for an iconoclastic genius, comes out as a bundle of eccentricities. He does not live. He is thinkable as a madman rather than a genius. The eccentricities of genius are accidents; here they become principal, so that the character is a mere congeries of petty revolts, a bundle of minor iconoclasm, rather than a man. The reality and sanity of his central revolt suffers in consequence. He becomes a mere ox (and a mythical ox) kicking against the pricks; or rather a mule. There are scenes and parts which interest one, for it is Mr. Yeats. The eloquence is like this:—

The Christian's business is not reformation but revelation, and the only labours he can put his hand to can never be accomplished in Time. He must so live that all things shall pass away. Give me wine out of thy pitchers; oh, God, how splendid is the cup of my drunkenness. We must become blind, and deaf, and dizzy. We must get rid of everything that is not measureless eternal life. We must put out hope as I put out this candle. And memory as I put out this candle. And thought, the master of Life, as I put out this candle. And at last we must put out the light of the Sun and of the Moon, and all the light of the World and the World itself. We must destroy the World; we must destroy everything that has Law and Number, for where there is nothing, there is God.

That expounds also the main teaching of the play—the teaching of pagan mysticism in general, but applied in Mr. Yeats's own particular manner to external things. Of the body of the play no extract would give a notion. It is a drama of revolt, but it is not a poem. And to anything but essential (yea, and quintessential) poetry we grudge Mr. Yeats.

The Heavens are Telling.

ASTRONOMY FOR EVERYBODY. By Prof. Simon Newcomb. With an Introduction by Sir Robert Ball. (Isbister. 7s. 6d.)

REMEMBERING that it was an earlier work of Prof. Newcomb's, designed for popular reading, that led Dr. A. R. Wallace to reconstruct a Ptolemaic astronomy and declare man the end and aim of all things, we opened this new volume with some caution, which seems to us to have been justified. Sir Robert Ball writes a most generous preface, in which he testifies to Prof. Newcomb's unquestionable distinction, and declares that his book must be named foremost for the hands of a beginner. With due deference we would say that Sir Robert's own "Story of the Heavens" is in every way a superior work.

Prof. Newcomb begins by taking it as proven—which it is not—that the starry universe is finite. Now, Prof. Turner has shown that Prof. Newcomb was in too much haste in publishing his former book wherein this belief was promulgated. Only recently it has been shown that the "coal-sack"—that great gap in the milky way—which was supposed to give us a glimpse past the confines of the universe into uttermost and desolate space—is no such empty gap, but is due to a great dark nebula, through which we cannot see. This discovery of the existence of dark nebulae is only second to that of the dark stars: there is no mention of it in this book. Not only, therefore, do we take entire exception to the first chapter, "A View of the Universe," but we are astonished to find further on so slight and inadequate an account of the nebular theory, which constitutes almost the sum of modern scientific cosmology.

Prof. George Darwin has shown that the length of our day is slowly increasing—by about twenty-two seconds in each century—so that the day and the month will ultimately be equal, the earth and the moon rotating together as if a solid bar ran between and joined them. This result of the friction of the tides, acting as a brake on the globe, is only

one of many remarkable consequences which will some day follow. It is, therefore, surprising to find not only that there is no account of this theory, but that "there is no reason to suppose that the time [of Mars' rotation] will change appreciably any more than the length of our day will." It will be seen that the volume is deficient in what we may call the more philosophical aspects of astronomy; the question of the infinity of the universe having been begged, and cosmology—historic and prophetic—being barely mentioned. More serious still, however, but also belonging to the same category—that of philosophical shortcoming—is another statement; and we emphasize this because it matters little whether the date of Halley's comet be given accurately to a year, or the Sun's distance to a thousand miles, but it does matter that astronomy should be used for its highest function, which is not to guide the sailor, or to delimit national frontiers, but to give majesty and grandeur to our conceptions of the universe. Prof. Newcomb makes the incorrect and inexcusable statement that the law of gravitation "is the only law of nature which, so far as we know, is absolutely universal and invariable in its action." This is bad philosophy and bad science. Throughout Nature there is no departure from law; and, to name instances, the laws of the conservation of energy and of matter and of momentum are at least as certainly invariable and universal, if not more so, than the law of gravitation. It seems to us a pity that such an eminent name should support so casual and indefensible a statement.

Some Books of Verse.

- LONDON LAYS. By Bernard Malcolm Ramsay. (Stock.)
 FROM A LONDON GARDEN. By A. St. John Adcock. (Nutt.)
 THROUGH THE IVORY GATE. By Thomas McDonagh. (Dublin: Sealy.)
 HORÆ AMORIS. By Rosa Newmarch. (Mathews.)
 A BOOK OF VERSES. By Millicent von Boeslager. (Chiswick Press.)
 KING AND CARDINAL. AS CROWNED QUEEN. By Stringer Bateman. (Simpkin.)
 VERS L'AMOUR. Par P. Riversdale. (Paris: En Maison des Poètes.)
 OCCASIONAL THOUGHTS. By John B. S. Camp. (Simpkin.)

DURING the last three months nearly fifty volumes of verse have accumulated on our shelves, the majority of which are very remote from poetry. From among these writers of verses it is not difficult to select one, at least, who possesses something of the intensity which demands rhythm as its rightful medium of expression. Mr. Bernard Malcolm Ramsay, in his "London Lays," tells his tales with force and with that vividness which is the result of force. There is, in this author's work, the spell of London the temptress, and of London the blind and merciless force. And he gives us, however crudely, the sensation of the infinite tangle of human lives working out unconsciously a common destiny. He shows us the London that crushes, assimilates, annihilates, now granting to the full the desire of life, now denying even the consolation of death. Of the war poems we cannot say much, but there is the flash of real energy in "The Gordons." Mr. Ramsay has undoubted vigour, and his impulse towards poetry is genuine, but art is no more likely to be mastered by force than by fraud—far less likely, many of our modern mockers would tell us.

Almost an antithesis to "London Lays" is a little volume entitled "From a London Garden," by A. St. John Adcock. These are for the most part contemplative poems, and they show, nearly all of them, a certain restraint, a certain delicacy of workmanship that make them stand

out from more strident productions. Sometimes, indeed, Mr. Adcock's verse has a quaint charm quite apart from mild prettiness.

"Horæ Amoris," by Rosa Newmarch, contains some graceful stanzas and betrays constantly a genuine feeling for music. The following little poem, "A Modern Greek Song," is from the Russian of Maikov:—

Silent lay the sapphire ocean,
 Till a tempest came to wake
 All its roaring, seething billows
 That upon earth's ramparts break.
 Quiet was my heart within me,
 Till your image, suddenly
 Rising there, awoke a tumult
 Wilder than the storm at sea.

In "A Book of Verses," by Millicent von Boeslager, one detects also the most subtle influence upon poetry, that of music. These lines, really suggestive of imagination, conclude the poem on the Hungarian composer, Csérnak:—

The nightingales are silent in the bushes,
 The frogs have ceased among the water-rushes,
 And over Balaton a long sigh hushes.
 But the Bundas, with a coat of many snows,
 In whose amber eyes the light intenser grows
 Lifts his wolfish ears alert and looks and knows.

We are indebted to Mr. Stringer Bateman for two volumes, a second edition of "King and Cardinal" and "As Crowned Queen" from the same publisher. As in the former volume so in the latter, Mr. Bateman gives us a little lecture by way of preface on "What is essential in Poetry?" The essential is expressed by Mr. Bateman in these lines:—

The language of Fancy and Feeling
 Expressed in the music of words,
 The true heart of Nature revealing
 In thrills from its tenderest chords,
 Thro' the souls of the Poets, repeating
 In verse what would else be as fleeting
 As songs of the birds.

Well, as one remembers "the bird-like" note of de Musset one almost wishes that some minor poets were not quite so placidly lucid. "This," exclaims Mr. Bateman, apropos of Wordsworth's "Complaint of a Forsaken Indian Woman," "Mr. Austin rightly condemns as 'distressingly prosaic'." . . . This is how Mr. Bateman's Henry VIII. in "As Crowned Queen" expresses his emotion on learning of Wolsey's death:—

HENRY: Dead! Wolsey dead!
 Alas! Then I have lost a minister
 Who had no equal in all Christendom.
 Dead! dead! the subtle brain and ardent soul
 That toiled so well for me and for the realm!
 Would I had kept him by me! Wolsey dead!
 Now am I worsted truly, am bereft
 Of strength and hope, of friend and counsellor;
 All fail me in mine hour of utmost need . . .

and so on. But let us return to our poet laureate's reference to the "distressingly prosaic" poem of Wordsworth. It seems that he considers it "on the whole an accurate and literal description of what a woman so circumstanced would feel." Perhaps some readers may consider Henry VIII.'s speech "an accurate and literal description," etc.; but it does not seem to us to have the remotest connection with "The language of Fancy and Feeling."

But after all it is quite useless to argue about the illusion of song:—

Wherfor I synge, and synge moot certeyne,
 In honour of that blisful mayden fre,
 Til fro my tonge taken is the greyne.
 And after that thus saide she to me,
 "My litil child, now wol I fecche thee,
 Whan that the grayn is fro thi tonge y-take,
 Be nought agast, I wol thee nought forsake."

Surely these lines from "The Prioresses' Tale" (Guildford: Curtis) give one a clearer notion as to why a poet sings than volumes of analyses of poetry. This delightful edition "has been carefully and exactly revised from the Harleian MS. of The Canterbury Tales, No. 7,334, in the British Museum."

And now, with the good taste in our mouths, how cloying, how tawdry, how suggestive of infinite repetition are the following lines from "Vers l'Amour" par P. Riversdale:—

A la coupe de l'amour
Je veux boire l'ivresse,
Et m'enivrer tour à tour
De joie et de tristesse;
Vivre dans l'enchantement
D'un, bonheur sans mélange;
J'aimer toujours follement;
Rêver à toi, mon Ange.

But, taking another plunge, we arrive at far more drowsy depths in Mr. John B. S. Camp's "Occasional Thoughts" (Simpkin):—

If but the academic could embrace
The new, and itself dispossess of guise
Old-fashioned and incongruous, what grace
And added import thereupon would rise!

* * * * *

Shall dead occasion and historic rite
Absorb all admiration, and dispose
No obligation to respect a right
Which forth from changing circumstance arose?

Here it is obviously advisable for us, at all events, to stop. Many volumes of verse are issued from the press, but signs of true poetry in them are far to seek.

Other New Books.

THE OLDEST CODE OF LAWS IN THE WORLD. Translated by C. H. W. Johns. (Clark. 1s. 6d. net.)

THIS little volume contains a word-for-word translation of "The Judgments of Righteousness," which Hammurabi, the great king, set up. This Hammurabi is Amraphel, King of Shinar, who with three allies made war upon the five kings of the Cities of the Plain (Genesis xiv.). And after the battle in the vale of Siddim, Abram divided himself against the victorious invaders, he and his servants, by night, and smote them and pursued them unto Hobah and brought back all the goods, and also brought again his brother Lot and his goods and the women also and the people. He reigned more than 2,000 years before the Christian era. Fragments of this code have been known for many years, but its almost integral discovery has been reserved to the year which Assyriology counts as its centenary. Not as had been expected in Babylonia was the discovery made, but at Susa, the old Persepolis, whither the block of black chert, eight feet high, was carried by some Elamite conqueror. Forty-four columns remain and have been deciphered; five columns are erased. The question how far the Lawgiver of Israel was indebted to the traditions of Hammurabi is one which will be fought out (probably with much unnecessary heat) in the future. The most pertinent consideration that offers itself at the moment to the ordinary reader is that peoples that have attained to one level of civilisation and live under similar social conditions may be expected to frame similar economic regulations. "If a man has hired an ox, and God has struck it and it has died, the man who has hired the ox shall swear before God and shall go free," decrees Amraphel; and the like you may expect to find in the

legislation of any pastoral race among whom experience of life has developed the innate sense of justice. The law of the Jews is far more elaborate and contains an element by the absence of which Amraphel's code is remarkable: for the latter shows no trace of sacerdotalism, and hardly any sign of familiarity with the preternatural. To this there is found an exception in §§ 1, 2, of which the former runs: "If a man weave a spell and put a ban upon a man, and has not justified himself, he that wove the spell upon him shall be put to death."

WORLD'S CHILDREN. By Mortimer Menpes. Text by Dorothy Menpes. (Black. 20s. net.)

A VOLUME containing a hundred reproductions in colour of drawings of the sort which Mr. Menpes has made familiar to us. The volume is divided into twenty sections, each dealing more or less with a separate nationality. Many of the drawings have character, and almost all a certain kind of beauty, though we are sometimes in doubt as to the accuracy of the character. Certain types which are ordinarily very diverse are represented here as practically alike; the costumes, of course, vary, but the racial characteristics are the same.

The text of the volume we find rather trivial and not particularly enlightening; indeed, it is full of those inaccuracies which have become the commonplaces of current talk, particularly where poor children are concerned. Nor can we find any value in such writing as this:—

No one is more adorable than the English boy, the ruddy Eton lad, who sits in the sun on a summer's day when his school is playing cricket, with his hat well back and his legs swinging. The Eton boy is a person to be respected; he has no priggish love of lessons, but is able to do a good day's work when called upon.

The best of Mr. Menpes drawings are those dealing with Eastern children, and particularly Japanese children. The English types are too pretty and too much posed. Indeed, the prettiness of the volume tells against its general accuracy; the making of pictures is one thing, faithful representation quite another. Still, it is a pleasure to look at Mr. Menpes' drawings, and that, for many people, will be quite enough. The reproductions are excellent.

LITERARY LANDMARKS OF OXFORD. By Laurence Hutton. (Richards. 5s. net.)

THIS book, the author frankly tells us in his introduction, is the result of a six weeks' stay in Oxford. It must have been six weeks of unconscionably assiduous labour, for innumerable original records had to be consulted and the works of previous writers searched. Mr. Hutton has a poor idea of Oxford's knowledge of its literary men. He writes:—

Very rarely does it happen in the colleges themselves that anything but traditional records exist as to personal locality, and in most of these cases, particularly in the cases of the older men, tradition, by some grubbier after facts, is proved, generally, to be absolutely wrong. . . . In too many, trying, exasperating instances the only difference between the authorities and the local personally conducting guides is the fact that the authorities know less, at no pecuniary expense to the inquirer, than do the guides know for the regulation fees.

But the guides, as Mr. Hutton plaintively points out, have a fine inventive faculty, so that the searcher after genuine literary landmarks is between two harassing fires.

Mr. Hutton is flippant concerning the men who tread "the higher University walks"; they know all about the Dative Case and the Birds of Aristophanes, but nothing about the Dreyfus Case and the sparrows in their own

back yards. Well, it is the Dative Case that they are supposed to know about, and the sparrows, after all, are not of much importance in University life. Mr. Hutton writes from an American University point of view, and he is apt to forget that Oxford is so accustomed to great names that she regards them more or less as common-places. But Mr. Hutton is quite sympathetic when he really gets to work; he may smile, but it is a smile with more envy in it than bitterness. So he perambulates the colleges, and digs out facts, and puts them down in his pleasant chatty way, and we are quite thankful to have his little book. He has arranged the colleges alphabetically, which will be an offence to some people, but Mr. Hutton is democratic. Mr. Herbert Railton's illustrations are characteristically delicate.

CRICKET ACROSS THE SEAS. By P. F. Warner. (Longmans. 5s.)

THIS book is a simple record of the doings of Lord Hawke's team in New Zealand and Australia. It will be remembered that Lord Hawke was unable to sail, at the last moment, and that he appointed Mr. P. F. Warner, the author of this volume, as captain in his stead. The illustrations are from good photographs, and the score-sheets merely confirm what was cabled over and appeared in the daily papers at the time. Apart from this there is not much to be said. The author confines himself rigidly to his record, and when about to be interesting, remembers that "that's another story," and stops. Lord Hawke's team went out to New Zealand under the auspices of the New Zealand Cricket Council; the amateur members of the team were paid their travelling and hotel expenses, minus their wine and washing bills; the professionals had everything except their wine bills paid, and, in addition, a liberal sum of money was given them. The author mentions all this because "one hears a good many remarks made not altogether flattering to the status of amateur cricketers." Any profit over and above the sum guaranteed to cover these expenses went into the pockets of the local club. The book is dedicated to the cricketers of New Zealand, "in the hope that the result of the tour may be to instil in them a strong and lasting enthusiasm for the 'king of games.'"

Fiction.

JUICY JOE. By James Blyth. (Richards. 6s.)

It is some time since we skimmed in the "Daily Mail," a journal which is happy in its selection of instruments for stimulating the amateur's passion for publicly revising "sensational" opinions, an article on a Norfolk village which filled us with concern for the illusions of Dr. Jessopp. For here was a man who found little but corruption behind bloom and cruelty behind cant. Sir Guyon in Acrasia's garden was less terrible than he in Arcady. There was an answer which somehow missed fire for lack of a love to equal this critic's hate. Mr. James Blyth was the critic in question, and he has converted his hate into a moving and terrible story whose strength one is tempted to define in horse-power.

Juicy Joe is a drunken oaf with a father to match. Dirt, drink, and mortgages have brought the pair to a state of mind so instinctively predacious that wolves in sheep's clothing were hardly a strong enough metaphor to warn one against their like. A sensual woman, soiled by irregular connections, but still, in essence, a lady, is misled by appearances, which are genially pastoral, and marries the abominable young man who gives his name to

the book. Gradually pillaging her, he adds blows to theft and is a murderer of the unborn. More tragedy follows, but we deem it unnecessary to take down all Mr. Blyth's "green shutters."

Hate, be it said, has served him well. There is no haze of generality about the performance. The author of "L'Assommoir" would have approved the masterly drawing of the wedding-day. The shot bird spilling its blood on the bride as she drives to the Registrar's, the gluttonous eagerness of the bridegroom and his father to appropriate it, the squabble at dinner over the beer still wanted when two gallons have gone down with champagne, constitute a picture which requires only the addition of "mucky talk" and the subtraction of some quasi-supernatural excitement to appeal as vividly to French eyes as our own. Juicy's landlord supplies one of the several offensive warrants for Mr. Blyth's indignation. Amazedly one watches him "industriously fingering" the supper before it is served, and saying "there fare to be a sight o' sloppy wittles, but wha's a-gooin to stiffen 'em?" Crowning his obscenities by an attempt at lewd black-mail he affects one like an unpleasant insect seen by a megaloscope.

Mr. Blyth attempts to pacify our Lady of Romance by the introduction of a white witch and a black witch. The former is conceived with much tenderness, and as mouth-pieces of impending fate they mitigate the suspense of a painful tale. We cannot conclude without the hope that if Mr. Blyth still reside on the edge of the marsh he may have always at hand a witch, or at least a "bottle," sound in voice and wing, to warn him of the danger which the perusal of his book by some of his neighbours might draw upon him.

ARDINA DORAN. By Susan Christian. (Smith; Elder. 6s.)

STYLIST is a word that smacks, like its relative scientist, of illiteracy, yet does Miss Christian by the very superfineness of her manner provoke her critic to utter it. All through this pensive novel the motive power is not the story but the style, and the style is of a beauty that suggests a fastidious weariness. We accord Miss Christian our sympathy diluted with a certain envy of that neglect of her by the fierce, eager and clamorous in life to which we fancy is due the lack in her work that prevents her from sustaining an illusion for more than five minutes at a time. She always has language at her command, but never does she attain that heat of conviction in which even English writing becomes ideographic and is read in pictures as one reads the book of life.

Yet her story is not commonplace. Ardina is the daughter of a prime minister, and one of her lovers is made viceroy of India. The other lover commits the picturesque crime of arson to win her; and she is won. The premiership and the vice-royalty are, however, mere counters, reflecting nothing upon Ardina, who is presented to us as an enthusiastic gardener with a taste consummately æsthetic for all its air of simplicity. The life of the book is such as can be snatched from the indescribable glories of the sky and the delicious cosiness of a wooded valley; something of life too is cleverly and artificially derived from a picture hung on a wall. We are, in fact, among the preciousities, although we feel a vague striving to dramatise the eternal things that matter. In the end we accept the plaintive irony which Miss Christian perceives, not for the first time, in human affairs. "Conventionally" we are told a handsome family should have been a compensation to Ardina for marrying a persistent and not ignoble rascal in lieu of the man who was too shy to ask her. That "conventionally" would fain be as biting as the false ending offered to fools on the last pages of "Villette," but there is less than a tooth to it because the book has no body. True, we remember a scream by which

Ardina in an hour of mortification called back her "perishing sanity," but that scream did nothing more than suggest the reality which Miss Christian is too dreamy to listen to. We are in fine left regretting that "A Pot of Honey," her first work of fiction, still remains her best though her title page ignores it in favour of a pale and poetic romance scarcely more vital than "Ardina Doran."

THE UNDERSONG. By H. C. Mac Ilwaine. (Constable. 6s.)

MR. MAC ILWAINE belongs to a steadily growing school of Australian writers whose work is marked with vigour and picturesqueness. Australia is as yet too young, too unevolved, to possess either a distinctive type in humanity, or a fit art expressive of that type. Her men, even her men of letters, are pioneers as ready with the pick as with the pen. The books they write have just those qualities of meat and iron essential to a pioneer. And in the quaint slang of the camp and the cattle-run, we recognise the dim beginnings of a new speech, fitted for a new people in a new country, but as yet crude and curt like the sharp cracking of a stock-whip.

Mr. Mac Ilwaine, like all the Australians who have written of the land of the Kangaroo, has a great sense of landscape, of the breadth and grandeur of his country. His stories show the reader the great woods, the crags and sands, the vastness and the loneliness. Like all Australian writers he gives one the feeling that in spaces so solemn, so lonely, and so immense, the individual is a poor stunted thing of less account than the cattle or sheep he helps to raise. He writes forcefully and well, without insistence upon the somewhat arid masculinity that has come into our fiction with the weak imitators of Mr. Kipling. "The Twilight Reef," the tale of two gold prospectors, is perhaps the best in the book, for in this tale he is more complete, more a definite personality, than in the tales of "Billy Durbey," "The Curse of Mungi," and in the two slight sketches which end the volume. At times his excellence in a phrase is startling in its poetry, as in his description of a daybreak—"Colour crept into the landscape like blood to the face of a pale sleeper." He seldom keeps this level for more than a few moments, but the book is eminently readable, full of colour, with movement in it, and less noise than is usual to such books.

Notes on Novels.

[These notes on the Week's Fiction are not necessarily final. Reviews of a selection will follow.]

THE COMPOSITE LADY. By THOMAS COBB.

A light-hearted story of modern life in Mr. Cobb's characteristic vein. The hero, a young man of great wealth, whose career at Cambridge had been undistinguished, went to the Royal Academy Exhibition and fell in love with the unknown lady who had sat for the picture of Juliet. He bought the picture and became acquainted with the artist, but the lady of the portrait was difficult to find, for she was derived from several sources. (Chapman and Hall. 6s.)

BEFORE THE DAWN. By JOSEPH A. ALTSEHLER.

"A story of the Fall of Richmond." When we first meet Robert Prescott he is returning to Richmond after three years' fighting for the Southern cause in the American Civil War. The action of the story passes in the capital of the Confederacy, to the President of which the hero brings a report from his commanding officer. He comes under the suspicion of assisting the escape of a

female spy. The book forms a long and laborious study of the time, and closes with the collapse of the South. (Hutchinson. 6s.)

ANNE CARMEL.

By GWENDOLEN OVERTON.

A tale of French Canadian life, by the author of "The Heritage of Unrest." The chief characters are a village curé, his sister Anne, and a young Englishman, who chanced to visit the village while on a hunting expedition, and was welcomed at the presbytere. When Anne found that by marrying the Englishman she would ruin his life, she agreed to dispense with the ceremony and so ruin her own. The story has a picturesque background and is well illustrated. (Macmillan. 6s.)

SARAH TULDON.

By ORME AGNUS.

A Dorsetshire story of fifty years ago, by the author of "Love in Our Village." Sarah was a scornful young woman who had been adopted by an aunt in the neighbouring village of Corfe, and who, on the demise of the latter, returned home with notions of cleanliness unsuspected by her family, and with much reforming zeal. The methods by which she regenerated the home and made "a prapper man" of her lover are related with humour and with successful use of the dialect. The book is illustrated. (Ward, Lock. 6s.)

IT CAME TO PASS.

By G. MANVILLE FENN.

On the title page we read that "a certain man had two daughters and a certain woman two sons." The woman was the squire's widow, and the man the rector of the parish. The action passes in the village, and is largely concerned with the loves of the four central characters. The narrative is of the old-fashioned deliberate kind, frequently sentimental, and ending on a note of pathos. (White. 6s.)

LOVE'S GHOST.

By EDITH ESCOMBE.

The volume contains two stories of equal length, "Love's Ghost," and "Le Glaive." The title story is a somewhat morbid study of elementary passion in modern conditions. The two men were friends, the one a doctor, the other the vicar of an East-end parish. The woman who married the doctor had formerly been the friend of the vicar, and moreover they had found that "there are human attributes that sometimes prove too strong for civilised limitations." On the woman's side this phenomenon recurred, giving the story a tragic denouement. (Duckworth. 6s.)

MARIE ÉVE.

By MARIAN BOWER.

A novel of contemporary social life, moving in diplomatic circles during the South African War. Marie Éve was the daughter of an Englishman of good family, who preferred an easy life on the continent to "the oblivion of a younger son at home." The heroine grew up at French pensions, and on the re-marriage of her father, fled to the protection of an English Aunt. The book has a cosmopolitan atmosphere. (Cassell. 6s.)

JIMMY.

By JOHN STRANGE WINTER.

The hero of Mrs. Stannard's eighty-first book is the son of a rich banker, who is engaged to be married to the daughter of his father's partner. The plot turns on the robbery of certain valuable securities from the bank. (White. 6s.)

We have also received: "In the Days of Goldsmith," by M. McD. Bodkin (Long); "A Gentleman of the South," by W. G. Browne (Macmillan); "No. 3 The Square," by Florence Warden (Long).

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Character Writing.

WOULD that this were an age of wit, as well as an age of science! We should have less difficulty than we have now in making up for that large deficiency of imagination which is the main characteristic of English literature to-day. Our decline in imagination is, perhaps, the inevitable companion of scientific tendencies; but not so our very palpable decline in the matter of wit. Wit is with us in general an uncultivated industry. Is it not possible that this is so, not because the national temperament is averse from it, but because our literary economy is so organised that wit has no means of struggling into recognition without the assistance of creative imagination? This creative faculty does not, after all, necessarily accompany wit, and in the case of English writers does so with especial rarity. An enormous amount of what might be valuable literature is, in short, crippled at the present time by the demand that it shall be in the guise of "fiction." And this when "fiction" is the last thing in the world for which most of our writers are equipped by habit of mind and education! We are singularly capable of telling the truth—and of telling it in much detail—but we "cannot lie." We are endowed, by long practice in scientific psychology, with unprecedented machinery for the analysis of human nature; we can ornament fact with apothegm to admiration; but create we cannot. The novel, however—or, at any rate, the story, whether short or long—a medium created obviously for purposes of imaginative creation, has grown to be the almost inevitable means of modern literary expression. Whether this be due to the recreative needs of the reading public or not, a story is, in practice, the only framework upon which prose which is not criticism can be hung. Accordingly, out of ten novelists of to-day, one will find that nine have told a story merely to excuse either a philosophic enquiry into human nature or, perhaps, some exercise of lighter observation and literary "conceit." Some sheer story-tellers we have, and the rareness of the faculty amongst us ensures them—as in the case of Mr. Hall Caine—a vogue that remains unaffected by the most monstrous shortcomings that may be evident in their works from the point of view of taste, style, and sense. On the other hand, there never was a period when those of our novelists who are story-tellers by genius were so few in comparison with those who are story-tellers by necessity.

This naturally suggests that our forms of literary production in general need modification. If so, where and how? On either side of the all-prevalent medium of the story there is, so far as prose is concerned, on the imaginative side, the drama; on the philosophical side, the essay. Of all phenomena which go to prove our modern English lack of imagination, one of the chief happens to be our practical inability to write drama, an inability which is based far more largely than is confessed upon the fact that to write a play—to conceive a detailed, directly and completely illusive scene—requires a more intense imagination than any other kind of writing that is practicable. Drama, then, is certainly not the direction in which our

habits of thought are likely to lead us to success. There remains the essay, a form of literature eminently fitted to the modern English temperament—and, indeed, to the characteristic English temperament of all time. It is in this matter of the essay that there seems to lie a possibility of extension. For some reason or other the essay as it exists to-day is almost entirely devoted to mere platitude or to criticism. Our recognisable authors may be roughly divided into novelists and critical-essayists. There is no reason why this should be so, and no explanation for it, except that the novel has absorbed into itself nearly all the functions of literature save the critical. From the critical essayist there goes up from time to time a sigh—a challenge—an assertion that he is not a parasite. That is a mistake. He is so, for the fact remains that he writes about the creations of others. But he need not be so. The essay upon life ought to be as much a possibility now as it ever was; nay, it should be more so, in consideration of the scientific trend of modern thought. In this regard, if we trace our literature back to the time before the growth of the novel, we shall see that in the uncreative study of human nature which found its literary outlet in "character-writing," England not only excelled the rest of Europe, but excelled it in a measure far beyond that which the majority of critics are prepared to allow.

This reflection is called forth very cogently by the recent publication of a volume of French character-writing, including selections from the admired La Bruyère and from the less important, and more self-confined Vauvenargues, with an introduction by Elizabeth Lee. (Constable.) That La Bruyère was a keen observer of manners in general, and in particular of the manners of a court with which it was his very good fortune to be familiar, is, of course, not to be gainsaid for a moment. That he improved upon the simple-hearted and elemental observation of the Theophrastus whom he translated is equally beyond doubt. But we cannot for a moment admit that either in the extent of his knowledge of human nature, or in sheer wit, or, above all, in his power of sympathy, he should be, for all his reputation, set above the character-writers of our own country—above Sir Thomas Overbury, and Bishop Hall, and Earle of the "Microcosmography"; above Ben Jonson, whose plays are studded with character-sketches that are not to be improved upon for the combination of insight and "conceit"; above Bacon himself, whose essays are many of them nothing else but "characters"; above Steele, who kept "The Spectator" human by innumerable masterpieces of character-writing, or above several other of our own classical character-writers who rejoiced in the mere transcribing of human facts, with the aid only of insight and the decoration only of wit.

How much La Bruyère owed, both of his contemporary and of his subsequent popularity, to the opportunity he had of portraying the famous men of a famous court it would be difficult to overestimate. At his best he is a mere recorder of selected manners. He does not enter into the minds of his fellow men, or see things from their point of view. He will say that a rich man "blows his nose with much noise, and spits all about," while a poor man "blows his nose into his hat and spits on himself"; but these are most superficial observations, of value only as recording the coarseness of a large number of the customs that prevailed during "the age of elegance." In every case La Bruyère states simply the obvious, and the paradoxes of human nature were quite beyond him:—

Here is a man who appears coarse, heavy, stupid; he is unable to speak of or describe what he may just have seen, but when he begins to write he is the very model of story-tellers. He makes everything speak that does not speak—animals, trees, stones; his works are full of lightness, elegance, good humour and delicacy.

Here is a character such as La Bruyère is capable merely of stating. He cannot solve the problem, and does not

try. He just leaves it as a phenomenon, and it so happens it has achieved immortality because posterity has recognised La Fontaine to be the subject. In a word, La Bruyère lacks almost entirely that sympathy—that power of projection into the mind of another man or woman—which is absolutely essential to portraiture of anything but the most primitive and straightforward kind. As an observer of manners La Bruyère is historically valuable, as a wit he is occasionally excellent; but even in the matter of wit he is equalled, and in the matter of insight he is far surpassed by several of our own character-writers, and above all by Sir Thomas Overbury, whose mastery of character-writing deserves far more recognition than is modernly granted to it:—

A good woman frames outward things to her mind, not her mind to them. She hath a content of her own, and so seeks not an husband but finds him. She doth nothing more than love him, for she takes him to that purpose. So she doth herself kindness upon him, for she is he.

To turn from the surface observation of La Bruyère to writing like that is to turn to a higher form of entertainment altogether.

The art of character-writing has, however, as we have seen, flourished in England under many other names than its own, and the English mind has invariably proved itself apter to it than to almost any other form of literature. It is notable that even when the novel had filled the whole horizon, and absorbed into itself every literary faculty, the greatest among the essentially English novelists were character-writers first, and story-tellers afterwards. Dickens and Thackeray both sought their first natural expression in the writing not of short stories, as is the prevalent custom of to-day, but in the writing of sketches, characters, studies in life, rather than in "fiction." It is for the sake of their possible encouragement of this vanishing form of art upon its own merits that one is inclined to welcome just now any reprint of the great masters who exercised it unoppressed by the domination of the story. One regrets especially that our young men should be forsaking this, the finest of all incentives to the learning of life, for practice in the construction of plots for short stories, which does not afford anything like the same nourishment for the mind, and does not demand the same healthy vigour and sympathy. It would therefore be a highly beneficial thing for literature if our popular magazines, which are to so great an extent the nurseries of literary youth, were to encourage, as far as in them lay, the writing of "characters" in lieu of short stories. Even as it is, the short story is betraying a decreasing appeal to the popular appetite, and in its place we find the fairy-tale of science and of fact, and the photographic biography of the professional "celebrity." The demand for this last commodity has been lamented; but in truth it is little more than a sign of the people's interest in themselves, an interest that could be catered for in a far larger degree than it is. There has not since the age of Elizabeth been in England a time when the life of the whole people was to so great an extent a public life. Thanks to a newspaper-press that all can read and all can buy, the world lives upon its own balcony, proclaiming its joys and sorrows, and even its domestic habits to the street, and feeling no shame in doing so. The personalities of politicians, preachers, actors, musicians, and the like have become matters of familiar household knowledge, through the mere accident of their public appearance. The personalities of the common people are not less worthy of conveyance. The necessities of the story, however, make the excitement of incident almost essential, with the result that such lives must needs be falsified or omitted in the mass of our literature. It is incalculable how much colour, how much precious human evidence is thus lost. In looking around, for instance, at the London of to-day, at the crowds in its streets, upon the tops of its omnibuses, round its hand stands, in its theatres, music-

halls, chapels, churches, libraries—in looking at the enormously increased freedom of communication, at the infinitely greater variety and scope of character thus open and vigorous London of ours presents in comparison with that which Dickens and Thackeray made immortal—the reflection is forced upon one that this great city is not recording itself as it should do at the present time. The fact that Elizabethan and seventeenth century London managed to record itself with such rejoicing vividness in the works of the old character-writers shows that the form of the novel is by no means necessary to the transcript of life. It must, of course, be admitted that a great novel is a higher work of art than a mere series of characters; but it is a thousand pities that so great a number of writers, who would willingly confess themselves incapable of constructing a great novel, should encumber with tedious efforts at invention their real faculties of observation. Let us hope one of the literary features of a reign which is affecting our actual life very evidently will be a recognition of the fact that the mere setting forth of that life frankly and truly needs no further recommendation to our palate than the salt of wit, or at any rate the relish of English humour.

Literary Values.

So much has been written about literature, so much, indeed, is being written about it, that we are sometimes tempted to think that we neglect the jewel for the setting, life for its verbal interpretation. And unquestionably literature in our day has been too much discussed both as means and end; work has come to be called creative which is by no means creative; indeed, strictly, no literature is creative—it is interpretive. In a sense it is the most dependent of the arts, subject to laws and conditions more strict even than those which control music, certainly more strict than those which control painting. Freedom it has, but it is a freedom in bonds, bonds which should be accepted joyfully as part of man's inheritance and unknown destiny. It has its roots in the life both of body and spirit, and is servant to that dual life. To say that is merely to state a truism, but it is well sometimes to have a truism for anchor when we propose to consider certain definite points in a subject so wide and vital.

There lies before us a volume entitled "Literary Values and Other Papers," by John Burroughs (Gay and Bird). Mr. Burroughs' work is well known in America, and to some extent in this country; he has written much concerning Nature both English and American, and a good deal concerning literature. So far as our acquaintance with the author's work goes this little book is his best; it has a certain simplicity and ripeness, a quietness and sanity which are very pleasant and very engaging. Mr. Burroughs' comments, perhaps, are never profound, nor does he hold us by a vivid personality, but he has a real sense of the honour of letters and he holds fast to life as the true begetter of literature. We cannot agree with all his conclusions, but we can always respect the spirit which has inspired them. Here at least is an honest student who out of a long experience speaks to us of things new and old.

What is it, asks Mr. Burroughs, that counts for permanence in literature? "As men strip for a race, so must an author strip for this race with time. All that is purely local and accidental in him will only impede him; all that is put on or assumed will impede him—his affectations, his insincerities, his imitations; only what is vital and real in him, and is subdued to the proper harmony and proportion, will count. . . . Only an honest book can live; only absolute sincerity can stand the test of time." The statement has such an inherent ring of rightness that

at first we are inclined to accept it. But the world, after all, is not a critic of intention, and of absolute sincerity who is to judge? A book may be artistically sincere yet by no means free from sentimental or ethical insincerities, but because it was artistically sincere the book may live. Mr. Burroughs insists that the man cannot be separated from his work. It is, of course, true that the personality of the writer cannot be separated from his work—his work and personality are one—but who is to say that a personality may not be assumed for artistic purposes which shall tell as strongly as the real personality? Posterity is only concerned with the result, and cares very little about the means. And even actual insincerity may live, and does live, here and there in literature, because insincerity is a failing common to all generations, and men are eager to have commerce even with the insincerities of their fellows. And there is no serious hurt in this; we cannot even regret it. It is always well to have specimens of the base with which the genuine may be tested and compared. Mr. Burroughs' list of books which endure on account of their "fundamental human virtues and qualities—probity, directness, simplicity, sincerity, love," is curiously narrow: he names only Bunyan, Walton, Defoe, and the Bible. We should ourselves hardly have named Defoe in this connection, and for "Bible" we should have substituted "New Testament."

Literary value, as the author points out, is capricious and uncertain; it may be diligently and earnestly sought after by one man and he shall never attain to it in all his days, while to some simple soul it may come as naturally as the sense of taste or of speech. A great writer may have infinite value without style, but we can recall no case of a writer having style whose work was valueless. Beauty of expression implies that there is something beautiful to be expressed. "The less a writer's style takes thought of itself," says Mr. Burroughs, "the better we like it." But if the style be part of the man, temperamental and organic, it is his business to cultivate it as assiduously as may be—else he falls amongst those who neglect their talent. When Sainte-Beuve said that the peasant, the simple uncultivated man, always had style he made one of those alluring, half-true statements which die so hard. The peasant may occasionally state a fact with startling directness or with unconscious beauty, but that is not to say that he has style; it indicates, usually, that he lives in a narrow and objective world in which certain things have forced themselves upon a fallow mind. Style in literature is conscious of itself. We seem to have reached a time when there is a kind of critical reaction against style. That reaction, we hold, has arisen from a great deal of loose talk and flaccid generalization. It is a writer's business, clearly, to write as well as he can; if he has an artistic perception of the beauty and value of words he will have style, if he is without that perception he will be without style. But that is not at all to say that his work will be valueless; it will only have less beauty. Mr. Burroughs would have us believe that the style of the born poet or artist takes as little thought of itself as the lilies, "it is the spontaneous expression of the same indwelling grace and necessity." Should a painter, then, not cultivate his hand, a singer his voice? The instruments through whose medium ideas are given expression should be treated with reverence and diligently kept in order. It is no honour to a soldier to fight with a rusty sword.

On the subject of criticism our author is wise and sometimes helpful. He holds the balance between opposing schools and finds the grain of truth in each, though he hardly sufficiently insists that the best criticism is appreciative. We do not suggest that a bad book should be too kindly dealt with; a bad book is as bad a thing as the world knows and it should be thrown to the dust-heap. But the most helpful criticism comes by way of appreciation; it is the play of a sympathetic mind about

the achievement of another mind, a light, as it were, searching out and exposing delicacies and beauties half withdrawn. Destructive criticism is on a much lower plane; one of the best and worst instances of it is Macaulay's famous Montgomery article. True, the butterfly was crushed; but it was as though a herd of elephants were employed to accomplish the trivial task. There can never be any standard of criticism, just as there can never be any standard of personality. Criticism can no more be classified and controlled than the spirit of man can be chained to a formula. Every man is a critic of something or other, and he who denies to criticism any value in art or letters is himself amongst the most militant of critics. Mr. Howell's notion of the critic is that he should "classify and analyse the fruits of the human mind as the naturalist classifies the objects of his study." At best that is only a minor part of criticism—indeed, we doubt whether it is a part of criticism at all. Books cannot be classified like plants or fossils. As Mr. Burroughs points out, art is an expression of life, and the critic is not examining a natural specimen. He is dealing with something which, for good or evil, has been endowed with possibilities of continuance far beyond the lives of generations of men, something holding within itself beauty, or mystery, or passion, something related to the enduring influences which control the world.

We have found this little volume a pleasant stimulus and a happy guide to quiet thought. The author writes with that placid detachment which is becoming rarer, or so it seems to us, every day. It is like listening to a man who, at the end of a long life, speaks about what has touched him without bitterness and without disillusion. There are a few papers in the book which deal with life directly, and these are full of a serenity which is very real. We quote a few sentences from "The Spell of the Past":—

Who would not have his youth renewed? What old man would not have again, if he could, the vigor and elasticity of his prime? But we would not go back for them; we would have them here and now, and date the new lease from this moment. It argues no distaste for life, therefore, no deep dissatisfaction with it, to say that we would not live our lives over again. We do live them over again from day to day, and from year to year; but the shadow of the past, we would not enter that. . . . There is no pathos in the future, or in the present; but in the house of memory there are more sighs than laughter.

These essays are unassuming, human, and sincere.

Paris Letter.

(From our French Correspondent.)

M. D'HAUSSONVILLE is a person of infinite leisure and of tastes in historical research of an eminently unsensational kind. Some years ago I had the pleasure of praising moderately but sincerely his first volume of "La Duchesse de Bourgogne." It related the travels and adventures of a little girl gorgeously robed, the minute and picturesque slave of etiquette and the idol of an aged king, who was more interesting assisting at her toilet and play than ever he had been in his many sorry love affairs. A tome, however huge, cannot fail to please us when the heroine is a child, and though M. D'Haussonville's study, even with such an attractive central figure, was of the most distinguished dulness it is possible to conceive, the book was readable. We cannot all have wit, humour, a delicate fancy, or a brilliant style, and there is no reason why we should withhold our esteem from a respectable writer like M. D'Haussonville because he lacks all those distinct attributes of literature. His mission is to produce academical tomes on worn-out themes, and this mission

he performs with leisured assiduity and learned monotony. His world takes him probably as seriously as he takes himself, and he is one of the pillars of the "Unique Review."

A year later appeared a second volume, and this was not nearly so interesting. Still there was a little pith in it, with a frivolous and not too edifying heroine indifferent to her ineffectual lout of a husband; and the clumsy and morose prince, glutton, hard-drinker and priest-ridden, suffering visibly from the wound of unrequited love gathered by pain some pathos into his dulness. Comes now a third volume on the same subject, with promises of a fourth. Who but M. D'Haussonville could find material for four immense volumes of 450 pages in the uncaptivating lives of such ordinary personages as the Duke and Duchess of Bourgoyne? All that need be said about them and about the Duke's great enemy and rival Vendome we have read of in the fascinating gossip of Saint Simon. This third volume is hopeless reading. M. D'Haussonville holds a brief for the unfortunate Duke, but he does not convince us that the prince was an admirable character simply because he was pursued by unmerited disaster and the victim of incessant misfortune. Such a fate often fastens itself to a chimney-sweep, a tenant farmer, a shop-keeper, and I do not see why, when the victim is a prince of the blood, we should be expected to regard him as anything else but a sad failure. Everything in those days enabled a prince to cut a decent figure in history, education, prestige, panoply, and panache. A clown with such adjuncts ought to be able at a moment's notice to do something striking. All the stupid Duke seems able to do with his advantages is to eat and drink too much, to spend his days on his knees or talking to his confessor, and lament in piteous letters to others his wife's indifference and silence to his messages. As a soldier he was less than mediocre, and we hear no charming trait recorded of him as compensation for all these deficiencies. One of the few good things told of that colossal humbug Louis XIV. is the magnanimous way he receives this sorry commander after each of his lamentable campaigns, and it is a natural feature in a wife who is not heartless that the Duchess should have espoused valiantly her unfortunate husband's career when she found him the laughing-stock of Paris and unjustly handled for misadventures over which he had no control, being in nowise responsible for the fact that nature had not made him heroic or clever. Vendome abuses him right and left, and the Duke receives the abuse with Christian resignation. We own a little less resignation and a little more spirit would have been vastly more becoming and sympathetic. The picture of Fénelon, the celebrated Archbishop of Cambrai, standing behind this insignificant prince and holding his napkin while he dines, is the culmination of the grotesque which surrounds the reign of the Roi-Soleil.

Another large historical contribution to contemporary letters is Lucien Perey's "Charles De Lorraine." At any rate we have here a man who counted in his times, a soldier whom his rival and enemy, Frederick the Great, admired. In his gross, good-humoured way, he is sympathetic enough. He was capable, off-handed, a libertine, too fond of the pleasures of the table, but there are shabbier figures in history about whom more ado has been made. Lucien Perey is a well-known and popular student of history. She has written many more interesting and individual studies than this, but it is evident that she has made the best she could of poor enough material. Maria Theresa has been so much and so well done that possibly for that reason she preferred not to risk a new drawing of immortal features, but in this she was wrong. It is always a pleasure to read something fresh written about a figure of such imperishable interest and charm as Maria Theresa, and this big volume about her brother-in-law would have gained if there had been more, and pages

more, about the great Empress. Looking over the long list of Lucien Perey's works, I find no fewer than five have been crowned by the Academy. They are all studies of historical personages greatly more interesting than Charles of Lorraine—Madame d'Épinay, Voltaire, the Princesse de Ligne, Marie Mancini Colonna, Madame Du Deffaud. Still, from time to time it is perhaps well to draw such figures as Charles from oblivion, and these historical labours in less-known paths of the past are not altogether wasted because we fail to detect any urgency or significance in them. There are too many writers, alas! all the world over, and how are their activities to be occupied, and the separate volume to be produced, if nothing but the important and essential is to be written? We are swamped with futile histories, futile monographs of all kinds, futile memoirs, autobiographies, and novels. What it was in Solomon's time we cannot now imagine, but if it matched our own, no wonder the weary sovereign cried out against over-writing. What is most to be remarked in those records of a past century, the Duchess of Burgundy and Charles of Lorraine being almost two parts of a same period written by different hands, is the prevalence of small-pox. Not a prince, a sovereign, an archduchess seems to escape it. Both books constitute what may be described as very respectable work, without inspiration or individuality.

H. L.

Impressions.

My Landlord.

SHE came in quietly and waited while I jotted down the outlines of some little swift stories I had read. I laid down my pen, lazily envying the man who plucked the flower of anecdote so often from the tangled thickets of life.

"I came to tell you," she said, "that one of Mr. Jones's men has just told Kate that Mr. Jones has shot himself."

I took the news with a proper scepticism, as though believing him dead might harm a liked and living Mr. Jones. Then I walked into the great gardens which are near my home—the home that Mr. Jones built or jerry-built—and with a book on Buddha in my hand was caught in a shower that grew into a deluge. The squirrels, feeling their privacy guaranteed by heavens effaced by clouds of no perceivable shape because welded together in one immeasurable mass, sported briskly in the trees or gravely sat on the reeking grass.

I found shelter, and read how nothing I eat or buy or see is real, the while the gravel path in front of me slowly widened as the grass by its side was submerged in a puddle as brown as itself. I read on without sense of irony, so dim was the sky, so still the trees, so ancient and reminiscent of ages gone by, the rain. The rain, blotting out the grass, blotted out fear and lust and curiosity; it laid that insupportable ME which goads men into suicide to rest beneath the earth.

But when I was home again, I turned traitor to the rain. "Who knows to how many a day like this is the last straw?" I asked, recalling an article which connected weather with self-destruction.

Then I was told that our landlord had really shot himself. It was in print, with the touch of inaccuracy that makes all Presses kin. He had gone down to his bath at nine—later than usual—and eleven o'clock found him in a red pool. He lived in a palace, but it was his wont to work from six of the morn to within an hour or two of midnight. Money, money, money; he had stood to it as a tree to the rain. Money, money, money; its falling and its refraining had dramatised his life. I lived cheaply in one of his failures, a shop in a neighbourhood that refuses to buy. I had seen him grow within three years

from a stout florid man into a stout pale man. Had I to give the last specific damnable name to his malady, I would say Ground Rents.

Now that he was dead, it remained for the living to fortify themselves against the reverberation of death's shock which had for audience all who knew his victim. Hence the workman who gave the news said: "Do you know what the governor has been and done now? Kicked the bucket." Our neighbour the female greengrocer, one of his tenants, said acidly: "The rich don't always have it their own way."

There were those, however, who wore less armour than these. Among them was a servant in an adjacent crescent. The house she lived in was a work by Mr. Jones, and she had heard that he had shot himself in his cellar. Therefore she feared to descend into the cellar of her mistress's house lest she should there meet the ghost of Mr. Jones.

Her debauched imagination induced a smile, but now to the tuneless monotone of patient, passionless rain, my brain neither sighs nor smiles. I ask now, sinfully, untrustfully, prematurely, out of the egoism that must be purged again and again before it can even desire the Nirvana which alone is peace, why the unrealities are so fiercely felt by the nerves that imagine their existence, why they are so vivid and substantial of aspect—so unlike all will o' the wisps and shadows—and why the Dreamer of all dreams is still dreaming into the semblance of being the charming falsehoods whose acceptance and affirmation are the cause of all things vulgar and miserable and mean? Perhaps my landlord, awake at last, could answer questions I have asked of God.

Drama.

Laureates at Play.

PERSONALLY, I enjoy a triple bill. The transitions of sentiment and emotion leave me in a gratifying state of mental equilibrium. And, just as there is room for the short story beside the full-blown novel, so there are certain things which can only properly be said in one act or two, and which, where the four or five act rule is inexorable, must either, like the frog in the fable, be inflated till they burst, or must remain unsaid altogether. But I believe that the British public, which does not find the rapid adjustment of its point of view a very easy matter, is not of my way of thinking. After all, it prefers its solid joint to the most appetising succession of light dishes. And so the triple bill at His Majesty's, which includes "The Ballad-Monger," Mr. Alfred Austin's "Flodden Field," and Mr. Kinsey Peile's adaptation of Mr. Kipling's "The Man Who Was," is only allowed to run for a week before the perennial "Trilby" is resumed. If I may return for a moment to the kitchen metaphor, this particular triple bill reminds me of nothing so much as of a sandwich, in which, by some singular accident, the bread has got inside.

There is something a little cruel in the juxtaposition of Mr. Alfred Austin, the official laureate of the English court, and Mr. Rudyard Kipling, the unofficial laureate of the British empire, on the same programme. Mr. Kipling's contribution, of course, calls for the more serious criticism. "The Man Who Was" is one of the most vivid of his Indian stories; and, even after it has gone through a process of debasement in the dramatic mint of Mr. Kinsey Peile, it still keeps something of its ancient thrill upon the stage. But what an odd man Mr. Kinsey Peile must be! You remember the tale. The White Hussars are given a dinner to celebrate their victory at polo over a native regiment. Among the guests is Colonel Dirkovitch, a Russian spy from over the Khyber Pass, who by orders from head-quarters is being politely

treated, as the subject of a friendly power. The toasts are over, and Dirkovitch, who is rather drunk, has already succeeded in irritating the susceptibilities of the mess. Suddenly a shot is heard in the compound, and the guard bring in a wretched ragged man, who has been captured as an Afghan rifle-thief. Amazingly enough, he mutters English and has a white skin. He is interrogated by Dirkovitch, and proves to be an English military prisoner of the days of the Crimean war. The spite of a Russian officer whom he had insulted had caused him to be kept back when the exchange of prisoners took place. He was sent to Siberia, and after twenty years has escaped and has crawled half dead across the frontier. On his back are the marks of the Russian knout. He is revived with brandy, and from the knowledge which he shows of certain half-forgotten traditions of the mess-room of the White Hussars, it dawns with horror upon the mess that he must have been an officer of their own corps. The regimental roll is fetched, and sure enough there is the name of Austin Limmason, reported as missing after Inkerman and never heard of since. The situation with Dirkovitch is getting rather strained, and is not improved by the Russian's brutal remarks about the victim of an "accident," or his fuddled discourse upon the fraternity of two mighty nations. But British courtesy is equal to the occasion, and Dirkovitch departs, smiling and unregretted. Limmason dies.

This is Kipling. Now for Mr. Kinsey Peile. Mr. Peile, apparently, found that the story, as it stood, lacked plot and lacked petticoats. He proceeded to introduce both. The unrelated Dirkovitch is brought into close connection with the past of Limmason. It was he who intrigued to have him kept in captivity; and his reason was that amorous advances of his own had been rejected by Limmason's sister. Moreover, this sister is actually dragged into the play, as the wife of the colonel of the White Hussars. She is present with other ladies at the regimental dinner, and has a conversation with Dirkovitch, in which he confesses his villainy. One expects her to denounce him, when he is confronted with Limmason; but this she does not do. As I said, I think that the metal of Mr. Kipling's work has been much debased in the process of adaptation. In the first place, the amount of coincidence becomes intolerable. It is already rather unlikely that Limmason would escape into India to fall into the arms of the very regiment which he had left, twenty years before, outside Sebastopol. But that he should also find there his sister and, independently, his sister's old admirer and his own betrayer, wholly passes belief. It may be observed that the convincingness of coincidences in works of fiction decreases in direct ratio to the square of their number. Further, it is essential to the dramatic situation that the very existence of Austin Limmason should have been forgotten in his regiment—a thing quite impossible if he was the colonel's brother-in-law and, as it appears, a not infrequent subject of conversation in the mess-room. Worst of all, Mr. Peile seems to me to have spoilt the tragic quality of Kipling's idea, by representing Limmason's long imprisonment as the result of a personal intrigue, instead of an episode in the struggle of two different types of civilisation for dominion in the East. Kipling is not constructing a melodrama. He is telling us the tragedy of an individual life, and throwing a search-light on what he conceives (rightly or wrongly) to be the methods and motives of Russian despotism. Dirkovitch stands as the representative of Russian civilisation; no direct relation between him and Limmason's fate is dramatically called for. It is a minor point that, whereas, in the story, Limmason's nationality is recognised when one of the subalterns hears him mutter "My God," in the adaptation the subaltern is made to say, "He must be an Englishman; I heard him say, 'Damn!'" and the cackle is inevitable. Surely, Mr. Peile knows that "Damn!" is not a serious

remark upon the stage. A final criticism bears more directly upon Mr. Tree than upon Mr. Peile. Mr. Tree's mastery of the minor histrionic art of "make up" is, of course, notorious. His Limmason seems to me quite needlessly realistic and painful. This is in keeping with the story; but it must be borne in mind that much is tolerable in written fiction, which is intolerable on the stage, for the very simple psychological reason that direct visual images are stronger than indirect visual images obtained through the medium of print and paper.

I suppose that a single butt of sherry can hardly be expected to last all the year round; and certainly one can only trace in "Flodden Field" the inspiration of the very smallest of small beer. A good-natured audience watched in amazed boredom, broken only by an unrestrainable snigger upon occasion, as when a distinctly mild ditty was followed by the remark "I like the singer better than the song." Personally I came away with the very vaguest idea of what it was all about, whether Ford Castle was in England or in Scotland, and whether Lady Heron was faithless to her country as well as to her royal lover or not. I know that it is the fashion not to take Mr. Austin seriously, and to content oneself with an amused smile at his poetical puerilities. But I always find it a little difficult myself to adopt such an attitude, or to repress a feeling of irritation at this long-drawn-out farce of the laureateship. After all, however it is explained away, it is a standing indignity to letters. One can only wish that Mr. Gladstone had carried out what was believed to be his intention of abolishing the post altogether.

E. K. CHAMBERS.

Art.

Soldier, Sailor, and Mezzotinter.

He dropped into a chair by the side of an elderly lady who was sunning herself in a garden, and, having admired her flowers, her lawn, and her dog, said "What do you know about Prince Rupert?" This elderly lady, whose mind was an encyclopædia of information, and who delighted to dole it forth, was not abashed by the question. "Surely," she said, "his mother was the daughter of James 1st, and he was the valiant and impetuous leader of the King's forces in the civil war. If you will give me a little time I think I can remember what Carlyle said about him. It was something like this—'from his Majesty's headquarters ever and anon there darts out, now hither, now thither, across the dim smoke element, a swift, fierce Prince Rupert, too like a streak of sudden fire.' I copied out that passage many years ago. Do you want to hear anything more about him, or is that picture of 'a swift, fierce Prince Rupert' enough?" "A little more, please?" "Well, this brilliant horseman, the 'Mad Cavalier' he has been called, was the glory of the Cavalier cause, and had his uncle Charles followed his advice the disaster of Naseby might have been averted. After his surrender at Oxford and the flight of Charles, Rupert took to the sea, was made Admiral of the Fleet, and proved himself to be as daring and resourceful a sailor as he was a soldier. The closing years of his life were spent in scientific pursuits. Oh, and I remember as a girl playing with Prince Rupert's Drops, little pieces of glass that flew into splinters if touched at the pointed ends. Why do you ask me about Prince Rupert?"

"Because—well, you must first know that in the Indian Section of the South Kensington Museum a remarkable exhibition of British Engraving and Etching is now being held. I found it quite by chance. I was wandering through the Imperial Institute road yesterday, at the hottest hour of a hot day, and, seeing through an open

door a seat in a shady place, I entered, and reclined before the façade of a shop in the Sarak Chowk, Cawnpore, with life-size figures of diligent natives. It was very restful, and I should have remained there an hour, had I not overheard somebody asking the way to the Engraving exhibition. It seemed so odd to be holding an exhibition of engravings in the Indian section of the South Kensington Museum, that I, too, asked the way, found it, bought a catalogue for sixpence, and spent two hours and fifteen minutes there."

"But what has all this to do with Prince Rupert?"

"Please give me time. It is one of the most thorough exhibitions I have ever seen. The catalogue tells you not only the history of engraving and etching in brief; it also describes all the tools and materials that are employed. Moreover, down the centre of the gallery are cases containing the tools themselves, and plates in various stages of progression. I peered through a magnifying glass in the mezzotint section, and saw a plate that had been prepared by rocking the grounding tool over it until the burr thus produced prints a rich full black. I learnt that the subject is then wrought by scraping away the burr in the lighter tones, and finally polishing the plate quite smooth in the high lights. I observed that the collection is arranged in twenty-six bays. In the first bay line engravings of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries are shown, in the last modern mezzotints. Between exhibit number one, a title-page engraved in the year 1545, and a wall hung with Mr. Whistler's etchings, what a splendid array of work is presented. Velvety portraits, landscapes, engravings of pictures, etchings, slight but sufficient—the walls are a picture gallery of fine things seen at odd times in one's life in shop windows, in portfolios, on walls, and remembered. Hogenberg's prim 'Mary, Queen of Scots,' Simon's alert head of Matthew Prior, Hogarth's busy incidents, Valentine Green's mysterious "Experiment with an Air Pump," Phillips's dainty 'Nelly O'Brien,' and those dull, capable line engravings, companions of my childhood, of pictures by Maclise and Frith."

"But what has this to do with Prince Rupert?"

"Patience, please. I infer from the attendance at this exhibition that British engraving and etching is not popular. On the occasion of my visit the visitors numbered five, but though few, they were, as connoisseurs, exceedingly fit. They carried chairs with them, and seating themselves before the engraving of their predilection examined it leisurely with bent brows and protruding head. I, too, took a chair, and asked myself which of these nine hundred and thirty-one silent witnesses of lonely labour shall I first patiently examine. My choice fell upon an example in bay three, for in my first cursory glance round the walls, it was this mezzotint that had given me a thrill of excitement, it was this mezzotint that lurked in my memory. It is called 'The Great Executioner,' it has been lent by the King, and it is by Prince Rupert. The subject is not exactly a pleasant one, but Prince Rupert, like Velasquez, had the hand and eye of a master: he so enthalls you with the treatment that the subject hides. This mezzotint has character and dash, just the qualities one associates with a leader of horse. The background is alive, and against the magic of its chiaroscuro stands, his head in profile, the full length figure of the executioner. His right hand grasps the head of St. John, the fingers clutching the hair, and his left hand holds the sword. The picture is one of repose; the deed is done, and the executioner's face shows neither regret nor elation. Stern, confident he looks, as if, like Moroni's "Tailor," he paused in grave expectation of your approval for work swiftly and cleanly accomplished. I haven't seen the original picture by Spagnoletto, but this reproduction, so unfaltering in its technique, so forceful, done with the apparently easy accomplishment of a master, is the work of a master, and his name was Prince Rupert."

"Oh, yes, I knew of Prince Rupert's connection with engraving, but I had no idea he was such a swell. No, he was not, as some have thought, the discoverer of mezzotint engraving. The credit of the invention belongs to Ludwig von Siegen, an officer in the service of the Landgrave of Hesse-Cassel, and the first plate ever produced was a portrait of the Landgrave's mother, completed in August 1642. Pray do not show amazement at my knowledge. My facts are of very recent acquisition. Long after the flight of Charles 1st, towards the end of Rupert's career as a sea rover and buccaneer—to be precise in the summer of 1654—he paid a visit to his mother at the Hague. In the same year, at Brussels, von Siegen communicated his secret to Prince Rupert, and soon afterwards Rupert must have started upon the plate of 'The Great Executioner.' It is dated 1658. The closing years of this war-scarred, weather-beaten veteran's life were spent as Constable of Windsor Castle, 'surrounded with armour and strange implements and old books.' On the walls of his room in the Old Tower at Windsor no doubt hung impressions of the fine mezzotints that in 1903 have drifted into the Indian Section of the South Kensington Museum, and no doubt on his table reposed a copy of John Evelyn's 'Sculptura' with its folded illustration of 'The Little Executioner.'"

"What, another Executioner?"

"No, the same design, but smaller. John Evelyn's 'Sculptura' contains the first English account of mezzotint engraving. Prince Rupert explained the invention to Evelyn, and in the Diary you will find brief references to Prince Rupert, thus—'this afternoon Prince Rupert shew'd me with his owne hands the new way of graving called Mezzo Tinto, which afterwards, by his permission, I publish'd in my History of Chalcography.'"

"A copy of this book hangs above 'The Great Executioner.' From its pages 'The Little Executioner' flutters, and—oh, yes, there is much that is well worth seeing in the collection, but Prince Rupert rather obsessed me. It seems strange that the 'Mad Cavalier' as you call him, the founder of the Hudson Bay Company, should have been a great artist."

C. L. H.

Science.

Circumstantial Evidence.

PERHAPS it will serve to dissipate that flavour of dogmatism which it is so difficult to avoid, and which is so essentially unscientific, if I try to present the factors of a problem as yet undecided—a problem which well illustrates the strength and the weakness of circumstantial evidence, and which is, at the same time, of high importance to our Indian Empire, to the Scandinavian and Iberian peninsulas, and to many other parts of the world.

For thirty years my friend Mr. Jonathan Hutchinson has maintained—against the united front of his scientific contemporaries—that leprosy is due to the consumption of imperfectly cooked and badly-cured fish. This is not by any means the first instance in which he has differed from everyone else; nor, if he prove to be right, will the outcome be unprecedented; and though few, if any, are prepared to follow him, we may all have to come round to his way of thinking in the long run. Last year Mr. Hutchinson went to Robben Island, South Africa, to study the conditions there existing, and he has only recently returned from a visit to India and Ceylon—a visit planned since the seventies. Certain of the newly ascertained facts he has given me permission to discuss, and I am also allowed here to announce that he will close his arduous life-work on this matter by the publication, within a few months, of a book which will be called

"Fish-Eating and Leprosy." When that book appears the Indian Government—aided by Lord George Hamilton, whom Mr. Hutchinson has already convinced—the medical profession and the Roman Catholic Church will have either to refute it, or to alter certain of their present manners and customs.

Centuries ago it was supposed that leprosy—then endemic throughout every part of Europe, save the interior of Russia—had something to do with the eating of fish. Mr. Hutchinson has observed that the Greek Catholic Church forbids the use both of fish and of meat on fast-days. Leprosy never gained a hold in Russia. Certain extremely interesting extracts from the works of Erasmus have been sent to Mr. Hutchinson, which show how prevalent in his time was the belief in a connexion between the malady and the food. These facts, however, will be kept over until the book appears. Mr. Hutchinson believes that leprosy began to disappear from Europe at the time, and as a consequence of the Reformation. It now lingers in Europe only in Spain and Portugal, Roman Catholic countries, in which there are as many lepers to-day as in Norway; and in Norway itself, where fish is so abundantly consumed. There are less than twenty cases in England to-day, where leprosy was dotted all over, not so many centuries ago. Furthermore, if a map of the world be prepared to show the distribution of leprosy, it is found that the disease exists practically not at all away from sea-coasts and river valleys.

Now millions of people eat fish and do not suffer therefrom. Mr. Hutchinson's hypothesis is that the fish must be in a state of decomposition; and it is the case that where leprosy abounds there is a widespread liking for decomposing fish; just as in this country we like "high" game. Such were the arguments for the fish hypothesis many years ago. On the other hand, there was the belief in contagion—a belief which certainly, as we all know, obtained in Biblical lands and times. In our own day, also, we have not yet forgotten the case of Father Damien, the martyr who went to succour what Stevenson had called "butt-ends of human beings," and died at his post. But experimental inoculations carried out on criminals in the Sandwich Islands and on doctors by themselves, as well as many accidental inoculations, have invariably failed to convey the disease; nor does Mr. Hutchinson deny that in rare cases, after long ministration to lepers, the disease may be contagious.

Some years ago, however, a Danish bacteriologist called Hansen discovered the microbe of leprosy, which is now known as the *bacillus lepræ*. When this discovery was established it became necessary to modify the fish-hypothesis. The bacillus, as Mr. Hutchinson acknowledged in his long letter to "The Times" last month, and in his present course of lectures at the London Hospital, has never been found in any fish. I do not for one moment believe that it ever will be. Nevertheless this does not dispose of the hypothesis, which must now be re-stated thus: the consumption of "high" fish so devitalises the patient as to enable the bacillus to gain a hold within him, similarly the pneumococcus—the germ of pneumonia—is present in the saliva of most of us, but no results ensue unless we be first exposed to cold or to some other devitalising agency. Such, then, is the present state of the fish-hypothesis, about which dermatologists of every land have fought with Mr. Hutchinson for the past three decades.

The tour in India revealed some remarkable facts. There are 100,000 lepers in India; a number which has probably remained stationary for centuries. Now the Hindoo is not supposed to eat fish; and one object of Mr. Hutchinson's visit was to ascertain the truth of the statements of Hindoo lepers to the effect that they had always observed this religious injunction. It appears that the leprous Hindoo usually has eaten fish; though the Roy Commission which went to India some years ago

decide, once and for all, for or against Mr. Hutchinson's view—concluded differently. But the remarkable fact comes out that, when a Hindoo becomes a Christian and a fish-eater his chances of catching leprosy are greatly increased. Furthermore, if he becomes a Roman Catholic his chances of contracting the disease are between twenty and thirty times as high as if he becomes a Protestant. This last fact seems to be generally admitted. Other observers declare that Roman Catholic settlements are less sanitary than the Protestant; but Mr. Hutchinson tells me that the general hygienic conditions of the Roman Catholic convert are vastly superior to those which otherwise obtain. Indeed, as he said to me the other day, "The Hindoo is dirty, eats no fish, is not a leper; the convert is clean, eats fish, and becomes leprosy." Notably is this the case in the island of Salsett—north of Bombay—which is a Portuguese Jesuit settlement. Therefore Mr. Hutchinson calls upon the Holy See to abolish the custom of fish-fasts wherever imperfectly cured or decomposing fish is consumed.

It is not easy to make up one's mind on this question. Mr. Hutchinson has nothing but circumstantial evidence; he has nothing that constitutes scientific proof. Yet the evidence is almost overwhelming; if only the bacillus could be found in the fish; or its usual "habitat" be ascertained. The Royal Commission, on the other hand, decided that Mr. Hutchinson's view was not proven, and accepted the theory of contagion as the only alternative. I think we must get some bacteriologist to see whether extracts of "high" fish have any stimulating and cheering effect on the *bacillus lepræ*. But there the matter stands. Let me but add that Mr. Hutchinson pays the highest tribute to the work of the Roman Catholic Church in India, and says that its converts are greatly benefited in a thousand ways. He wishes the Church all success, and merely asks that it shall forbid the use of fish on fast days. If this is done, the test should at any rate be crucial. And it is worth making: there are few things more utterly horrible and ghastly than leprosy, even on this strange planet.

C. W. SALEEBY.

Correspondence.

Dryden's Plays.

SIR,—In connection with the note which appeared in your bibliographical column last week I should like to say that it is my intention to include Dryden's Plays in the thin-paper re-issue of the "Mermaid" series which I am bringing out.—Yours, &c.,

11, Paternoster Buildings, E.C. T. FISHER UNWIN.

The Alleged Vandalism at Stratford-on-Avon.

Under the above heading we have received a letter from Mr. Sidney Lee which, printed in full, would occupy seven columns of our space. We give the following salient extracts:—

After due investigation of the circumstances, I have now assured myself that the public has been misled on almost all the essential points. Spasmodic endeavours have been made to remove the misconceptions from the public mind. But they persist in many quarters.

Two separate issues have been raised in the strife and have not always been kept adequately distinct. The Trustees of the birthplace, as constituted by the Act of Parliament of 1891, form a body that is quite independent the Corporation of Stratford. The Act gives the

Corporation a large representation on the Board of Trustees, but each body has its own statutory functions.

In regard to the present issues, the Trustees are solely concerned with the fate of the cottages in immediate proximity to the birthplace garden, which were purchased by Mr. Carnegie for presentation to them. The second issue touches the fate of another building, which, although it adjoins this newly acquired property of the Trustees, belongs to the Corporation, and has, in the exercise of that body's exclusive discretion, been appropriated by it to the projected free library.

Some knowledge of the past history and present condition of Henley Street, in which stand Shakespeare's birthplace and all the buildings involved in the dispute, is essential to a just view of the situation. . . . Henley Street is undoubtedly one of the oldest in the town. Its records date from the Middle Ages. But no part of Stratford underwent more frequent or more complete renovation between the date of Shakespeare's death and the end of the last century. As the little Elizabethan or Jacobean houses of timber and rough-cast fell in the course of ages into decay, they were from time to time replaced by new structures, usually wholly of brick. More than sixty houses form the street. The owners (of all but two or three, belonging to the Corporation) were private persons in humble circumstances, who naturally carried out the needful renovations with a sole regard to economy, and with no consciousness of sentimental considerations. As a result the street, with the exception of one short strip, has long been lined by low featureless brick-fronted tenements, ranging in date through all the decades of the nineteenth century.

It is common knowledge that Shakespeare's birthplace, with the adjoining house, which was also his father's property, is now distinguished (among other things) from the rest of the street, by enjoying permanent protection from the vicissitudes to which its neighbours have always been liable. But Shakespeare's birthplace, as it is now, is no survival from Shakespeare's day. The structure had suffered experiences very like those of its neighbours before it was purchased for the public in 1847. Some thirty years earlier half of it was furnished with a brand new brick front and the timber facade concealed and damaged. The present exterior is the outcome of a thorough-going re-construction which conformed to a sketch made in 1788.

The present position of affairs as far as the Trustees are concerned is due to a fire which in 1896 completely destroyed two small shops in Henley Street, six doors off the little garden on the east side of the birthplace. The accident brought home to the Trustees the desirability of isolating the birthplace more effectually than before from neighbouring premises. To secure this object, it was necessary to acquire the cottages in Henley Street which abutted on the narrow gardens of the birthplace. It was desirable either to demolish these and extend the garden over their vacant sites, or to free them of danger of fire by withholding them from domestic or mercantile occupation. Some doubt was justifiable as to whether the terms of the trust allowed the Trustees to apply their funds to these purposes. But last year Mr. Carnegie relieved the Trustees of difficulty on this score by purchasing for presentation to them, a row of four cottages on the east side, where the risk of fire was chiefly imminent.

No conspicuous historic nor archaeological interest attached to any of the four houses. The two furthest removed from the birthplace (on whose site once stood a single timbered and thatched cottage) were little better than hovels; they had been crudely built of cheap modern brick within living memory, were innocent of all architectural features, and were at the back in ruinous condition. These two tenements have been recently demolished and the site is to be converted into a garden.

I now turn to the action of the Corporation in the matter of the free library.

Mr. Carnegie's gift did not originate the library movement there. Before that was in question, efforts were made to establish a free library, and it was understood at Stratford that Miss Corelli, who now attacks both Trustees and Corporation on the ground that the town "has never sought a free library at all," generously proposed to provide a site for a free library or reading room, in furtherance of the townsfolk's wishes.

Irresponsible gossip reiterated throughout the controversy—even as lately as May 17—that Mr. Carnegie proposed to erect in proximity to Shakespeare's birthplace an ostentatious building of palatial splendour. This suggestion is a meaningless travesty of the truth. The only part that Mr. Carnegie has played in the business has been to promise payment for the library building, whatever the form the Corporation allotted to it, and on whatever site they placed it. He has expressed the wish that his name should not be bestowed on the building and that it should be merely called "The Stratford Free Public Library." The circumstances of the case excluded from the Corporation's consideration an elaborate architectural design. The cost of maintaining the new library was to fall on the rates, and the rateable value of a little town like Stratford was quite small. Consequently, the authorities were debarred by their legal obligations from ever contemplating the erection of any but a building of modest dimensions which would alone be appropriate to the size and rateable capacity of the place. The selection of the Henley Street site was induced by like imperative practical considerations, and, despite all the bold assertions to the contrary, no rational archaeological interests are jeopardised thereby.

Thus it will be recognised that, so far from destroying "historic Henley Street," the Trustees and the Corporation, through the generous aid of Mr. Carnegie, are doing precisely the opposite. They are permanently preserving all structural work in houses under their control there, which has proved, on accurate examination, to possess any kind of archaeological interest. The process of modernising Henley Street had in past years progressed very far, and of late, but for Mr. Carnegie's interposition, threatened a conspicuous advance. That process has now, at an interesting point in the thoroughfare, been arrested, and some careful [and scholarly] restoration has been made practicable.

Our Weekly Competition.

Result of No. 197 (New Series).

Last week we offered a prize of One Guinea for the best comment, not exceeding 150 words, on any article, review, or paragraph appearing in that issue of the ACADEMY. Thirty-one replies have been received. We award the prize to Miss Violet Wilson, Dundee Sanatorium, Auchterhouse, for the following:—

EXUBERANCE.

But is it desirable to encourage the exuberant, when exuberance is often extravagance, and extravagance sometimes profligacy? The rotund and rubicund are not always the robust: the florid is not always the felicitous: oftener strength is austere, and "oftener felicity comes of simplicity." A Flaubert can wither fifty florid paragraphs with one wan word.

And the exuberant occupy so much space! Aristophanes cannot confine his "Birds" in a cage, and his "anarithmon galasma" will not be satisfied with a mill-pond. Rabelais requires more than a stable for Gargantua's mare, and much latitude for his laughter—his "rire immense." Falstaff needs a torrid zone for his paunch: Dumas needs the illimitable veldt for "his loose shoulders and rolling chest"; and Cyrano's "promontory" nose has pretensions to at least a province. Exuberance is apt to be exuberant, and we must not overcrowd a little planet.

Other replies follow:—

"EXUBERANCE."

It is breathless! If in its latest manifestation we are to take exuberance as consisting chiefly in an avalanche of words, there be many will thank heaven the gift is but rarely bestowed. And indeed quality rather than quantity should surely ask consideration first; the nice and happy epithet worthily applied outweighs the thundering cataract of indiscriminate synonym. Else shall not every writing animal, man, woman, poet, author, playwright, critic, essayist, novelist, reporter, interviewer, scribbler, hack and printer's devil hold himself full at liberty to swamp, flood, inundate, drown, devastate, and generally swallow up all that we have hitherto held most choice, rare, and eclectic in a world of literature dainty in its desire and lofty in its accomplishment? Exuberance is a charming fault, a fearsome virtue; a good slave but a terrible master. In ignorant hands, what a weapon! Ye gods, preserve us!

[B. C. H., London.]

IMAGINATIVE AND MORAL COWARDICE.

The distinction between imaginative and moral cowardice (p. 637) is valuable and needed. It is good psychology, and not only explains Macbeth in the play, but many cases otherwise puzzling in actual life. Their lack of imagination makes Englishmen the best fighters in the world; the Celtic races may be as good or even better in the grapple, but they are more liable to scare and panic in the advance. Is a man then the better or worse for being "imaginative to the core"? It depends on his place and use. The private soldier is better without the gift. To the mixer of cordite it must be an unqualified drawback. But in the higher tasks of life an imaginative man, even though he may see "lions in the way," will excel in insight, forecast, and sympathy. His possession, however, is not a source of undiluted happiness to himself, and he will be frequently misunderstood by those who fail to make this capital distinction.

[C. H. M., London.]

"REAL" PEOPLE.

Jean Ingelow and Mr. Raymond Blathwayt wish to know whether Rhona Boswell was a real woman, and Mr. Watts-Dunton replies that Rhona and Sini are actual types of gypsy. The eternal child in the interviewer and his public is satisfied. All children like a "true" story. Perhaps Mr. Watts-Dunton is playing hide-and-seek in that satisfactory ambush "actual type." The plain man brought up on sermons cannot connect "types" and actuality without a severe mental strain. And the critic will reflect, like the urchin unwillingly recipient of his elder's wisdom: "Now we know what you know."

We are no nearer the actuality of Rhona and Sini than if Mr. Blathwayt had refrained from question, or Mr. Watts-Dunton from his cryptic answer. Rhona and Sini are the author's dream children—realer than realism certainly—realer than reality possibly. All the same their Bohemia is that sea-coast known of the poet. Their reality is that of the metaphysician's noumena.

[J., St. Ives.]

FUN AND FORTY.

In the ACADEMY for last week there is an article called "Fun and Forty" in which the writer laments that the humour of one generation has but little effect upon the midriff of the next—that "Max Adler" and his genial kind leave us saddened by their best sprightliness "when we come to forty year." If they tickle us we do not laugh but yawn; and we have a horrid sense of ingratitude in yawning.

To us who have still some ardent years to face there is horror in the thought that we shall take our turn. Our pathos will evoke no tears, as their fanning has provoked no laughter. Our grand moments will be ridiculous episodes, our grand passions ludicrous contortions of the senses. Bitterest of all, if we gain our heart's desire, we shall have lost the longing for it—perhaps even the memory of that longing.

[A. L. G. H., London.]

SCOTS LITERATURE, PAST AND PRESENT.

Mr. Crosland came along the other day with his miniature bludgeon in his little fist, and so tickled Scotsmen that they laughed and wished more power to his elbow; and now we have Mr. Millar in the character of Jack the Giant Killer, armed with bow and gall-tipped arrows against living Scots novelists. Mr. Millar seems to consider an artistic crime more serious than an infraction of the Decalogue—a position which few Scotsmen would take up. One cannot admire sufficiently the judicial attitude of your reviewer, who might be a Scot himself, so careful is he not to commit himself to Mr. Millar's point of view. Perhaps most of the novels indicated would hardly be classed as literature at all, even by their authors; but if they were, surely the sanest criticism would be on the lines suggested in the last paragraph of your article entitled "Fun and Forty."

[T. McE., Belfast.]

RACIAL DECAY.

Here is a subject surely of sufficient national importance to occupy the immediate interest and consideration of thoughtful people! In fact, that it is attracting public attention was proved only last week when an article of a column's length upon the subject appeared in one of the leading daily papers. Certain statistics and facts were submitted, proving that the general physique of the present generation—in England at least—is not degenerating, but rather improving!

The present article, therefore, is doubly interesting, adopting as it does an entirely opposite view of the matter. Without entering upon a discussion—but judging as impartially as we may—we must admit that the standard of general physical fitness in our highly civilized countries is lower than it ought to be—lower than that found in our colonies, for instance!

Surely further investigation would prove acceptable upon a subject of such vital import!

[F. C., London.]

ON THE BEST PROSE STYLE.

When the same article recommends "plainness" of style and prescribes the reading of Pater, one pauses to reflect, remembering the indistinctness which is his charm. Are these two sides of one truth—"Be yourself"—whether opaque, or plain? This indistinctness seems characteristic of the age. We see so many sides of a question, that we see none, and have no enthusiasm to bias our scales of opinion. Therefore, our style is tolerant, insipid, like ourselves. While we are advocating this point of view, we are re-considering that, and when we have considered both, neither seems worth fighting for. We dress our jaded thoughts in elaborate words, and like some people, they look worse when thus arrayed. Some thoughts "lie too deep for words" indeed, but these are silent. Our current ideas seem to need transparent language to reveal them, as pebbles in a clear pool.

[C. M. W., Reigate.]

DANTE. (The last of it?)

Is it so very certain that Dante was "far from happily married"? I doubt it. We know little enough of this great man's real life—little enough of any man's—not only of the past, but even of to-day. It is given to few to be haunted by a Boswell. But no one escapes the silly gossip—the grieved or the grinning detractor, and the great pay heaviest toll. The story of Dante's unhappy married life rests on nothing more serious than hearsay gossip, served up by that born raconteur, Boccaccio; none too anxious as to the truth of his effective light and shade. And there is no confirmation anywhere. But we do know that to this so-called unhappy wedded pair, Dante Alighieri and Gemma di Donati, were born five sons and one daughter. And the daughter's name was Beatrice.

[W. S. B., Blackheath.]

THE PROMISE OF MR. DAVIES.

This criticism is based on a false issue. Your critic has trailed a red-herring under the noses of your readers in his proviso, that, "within the plane of reality Mr. Davies has chosen for himself he should preserve a consistency." No such obligation binds the world. Admitted that "Kate Curtis" is "a real human being with emotions, affections, self-respect, and the rest," "the rest" explains her giving herself to a man who has broken another engagement. Emotions and affections are inconsistent with self and other respect. There is no specific against falling-in-love. Trifles fan the Promethean fire which smoulders in every heart. Rosalind loved because Orlando broke ribs, Juliet because Montagu had a son, Beatrice because Benedick loved her.

"Whoever loved that loved not at first sight!" though we mistake the sensation sometimes for the "little aversion" with which it is "safest to begin." Your critic's "attitude" is not "warped" by literary bias, but by inexperience.

[N. F. D., Rowledge.]

Competition No. 198 (New Series).

This week we offer a prize of One Guinea for the best description of a Summer Evening, either in verse or prose. Prose replies not to exceed 250 words, and verse not to exceed 16 lines.

RULES.

Answers addressed, "Literary Competition, THE ACADEMY, 43, Chancery Lane, W.C.," must reach us not later than the first post of Wednesday, 8 July, 1903. Each answer must be accompanied by the coupon to be found on the second page of Wrapper, or it cannot enter into competition. Competitors sending more than one attempt at solution must accompany each attempt with a separate coupon; otherwise the first only will be considered. Contributions to be written on one side of the paper only.

New Books Received.

POETRY, CRITICISM, AND BELLES LETTRES.

- Taylor (Edward Robeson), *Visions and Other Verse* (Robertson) 1/0
 Spiers (Kaufmann C.), *Giudo and Veronica* (Nutt) net
 Wilberforce (Edward), *Dante's Inferno and Other Translations* (Macmillan) net 6/0
 Chellington (Rupert), *The Lost Hamlet* (Stock) 2/6
 Hastie (William), *The Festival of Spring, from the Divan of Jelaleddin* (Maclehose) net 3/0

HISTORY AND BIOGRAPHY.

- Smith (William Henry), *A Political History of Slavery*. 2 vols. (Putnam's) 25/0
 Jones (G. Hartwell), *The Dawn of European Civilization* (Kegan Paul) net 12/0
 Andrews (Amelia), *Little Notes on Shakespeare's England* (Sonnenstein) 1/0
 Hutton (Laurence), *Literary Landmarks of Oxford* (Richards) 2/0
 Standing (Percy Cross), *Rashtsinhi, Prince of Cricket* (Arrowsmith) 3/6
 The Annual of the British School at Athens, 1901-1902. (Macmillan) net 17/0
 Lavisse (Ernest), edited by, *Histoire de France. Tome II, L.* (Hachette)
 Turner (William), *History of Philosophy* (Ginn) 12/6

SCIENCE AND PHILOSOPHY.

- Stratton (George Malcolm), *Experimental Psychology* (Macmillan) net 8/6
 Hudson (Thomson Jay), *The Law of Mental Medicine* (Putnam's) 7/6
 United States Geological Survey. Vols. XLII. and XLIII. (Government Printing Office, Washington)

TRAVEL AND TOPOGRAPHY.

- Heywood (William) and Olcott (Lucy), *Guide to Siena* (Unwin) net 6/0
 Mitton (G. E.), and Others, *The Fascination of London: Mayfair, &c.* (Black) net 1/6

EDUCATIONAL.

- Pearson (A. C.), edited by, *The Helena of Euripides* (Clay) 3/6
 Choate (R. H.), *The Junior Arithmetic* (Clive) 2/6
 Burton (Ernest de Witt) and Mathews (Shailer), *Principles and Ideals for the Sunday School* (University of Chicago Press)
 Haggard (H. Rider), *King Solomon's Mines. (School Edition)* (Cassells) 1/3
 Hart (Albert Bushnell), *The Romance of the Civil War* (Macmillan) 3/6

MISCELLANEOUS.

- Irving (Washington), *The Fur Traders* (Putnam's) 3/6
 Gilson (Roy Rolfe), *In the Morning Glow* (Harper) 3/6
 Murray (Dr. James A. H.), *A New English Dictionary, R-Reactive. Vol. VIII.* (Clarendon Press) 5/0

NEW EDITIONS.

- Milton (John), *Poetical Works* (Cambridge University Press) net 5/0
 Augustine (St.), *Temple Classics: The City of God*. 3 vols. (Dent) each, net 1/6
 Long (George), translated by, *The Discourses of Epictetus*. 2 vols. (Bell) each, net 1/0
 The Windsor Shakespeare: *Timon of Athens* (Jack) net 2/0
 Roberts (W. K.), *Divinity and Man* (Putnam's) net 7/6
 Hardy (Thomas), *Under the Greenwood Tree* (Macmillan) 3/6
 Dickens (Charles), *Martin Chuzzlewit* (Chapman and Hall and Frowde) net 2/0
 " " *Hard Times, &c.* (" " ") net 1/6
 " " *A Tale of Two Cities* (" " ") net 1/6
 Sergeant (Adeline), *A Rogue's Daughter* (Arrowsmith) 0/6
 Green (John Richard), *A Short History of the English People. Part 27.* (Macmillan) net 0/6
 Thackeray (W. M.), *Philip*. 2 vols. (Dent) net 6/0
 Macdonell (Anne), translated by, *The Life of Benvenuto Cellini, written by himself*. 2 vols. (Dent) each, net 2/6
 Edgeworth (Marie), *Belinda* (Macmillan) net 2/0

PERIODICALS.

- World's Work, Good Words, Sunday, Cornhill, Macmillan's, Temple Bar, Empire Review, Century, St. Nicholas, School World, Pearson's, Lady's Magazine, Windsor, Harper's, Reliquary, New Liberal, Blackwood's, Westminster, Contemporary, Monthly Review, Comptoir, English Illustrated, International Journal of Ethics, United Service, World's Work, Reader.

The Delegates of the Clarendon Press propose to supplement their facsimile of the Shakespeare First Folio by publishing facsimile reproductions of the earliest accessible editions of that portion of Shakespeare's work which found no place in the First Folio. The excluded portion consists of the four poetical quarto volumes: "Venus and Adonis" (1593), "Lucrece" (1594), "The Passionate Pilgrim" (1599), and the Sonnets (1609), as well as the play of "Pericles," which was first published in quarto in 1609, but was not included in a collected edition of Shakespeare's plays before the third folio edition of 1664. The four volumes of the poems and the volume of "Pericles" will be reproduced by the colotype process, and will be similar in all respects—size only excepted—to the colotype reproduction of the First Folio edition of the plays, published by the Delegates in December 1902. This reprint will be executed under the direction of Mr. Sydney Lee, who will contribute full introductions containing the latest results of his researches with regard to the bibliography of Shakespeare's "Poems," and of the play of "Pericles." The Delegates hope that these reproductions will be ready for publication in the autumn of 1904.

